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O RULERS OF THE NATION.

BY ALICE CARY.

O Rulers of the Nation,
Give ear, give ear, I pray—
A band of anxious women
Are your suppliants to-day;
A band of grief-worn women,
Who can only wait and pray.

Stoop down, stoop down and tell us,
O Rulers of the Land,
How long can this, our stricken
And imperilled country, stand.
Her States thus washing from her
In blood, like grains of sand!

We have hushed our full hearts' crying,
We have left our tears unshed;
We have sent our sons to battle,
In their beauty they are dead;
What comfort, O our Rulers,
Have you sent us in their stead?

Must we meet the darkened faces
Of our children that remain;
Must we hear their bitter crying
For the brothers, lovers slain;
Must we never see the breaking
Of the bright, glad day again?

SELF-MADE;

OR,

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

BY MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "THE LOST HEIRESS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.

> "Your pardon, noble lady!
> My friends were poor but honest so is my love;
> Be not offended, for it hurts him not
> That he is loved of me. My dearest madam,
> Let not your hate encounter with my love
> For loving where *you* do."
> SHAKESPEARE.

The poor sisters had just finished their afternoon meal, cleaned up their room, and settled themselves to their evening's work. Nora was spinning gaily, Hannah weaving diligently—the whirr of Nora's wheel keeping time to the clatter of Hannah's loom, when the latch was lifted and Herman Brudenell, bringing a brace of hares in his hand, entered the hut.

"There, Hannah! those are prime! I just dropped in to leave them, and to say that it is certain my mother leaves for Washington on Saturday. On Sunday morning I shall bring my wife home; and you, too, Hannah; for if you will not consent to live with us, you must still stop with us until you and Gray are married and ready to go to the West," he said, throwing the game upon the table, and shaking hands with the sisters. His face was glowing from exercise, and his eyes sparkling with joy.

"Sit down, Mr. Brudenell," said Hannah, hospitably.

The young man hesitated, and a look of droll perplexity passed over his face as he said:

"Now don't tempt me, Hannah, my dear; don't ask me to stop this evening; and don't even *let* me do so if I wish to. You see I promised my mother to be home in time to meet some friends at dinner, and I am late now! Good-bye, sister; good-bye, sweet wife! Sunday morning, Mrs. Herman Brudenell, you will take the head of your own table at Brudenell Hall!"

And giving Hannah a cordial shake of the hand, and Nora a warm kiss, he hurried from the hut.

When he had closed the door behind him, the sisters looked at each other.

"Think of it, Hannah! This is Thursday, and he says that he will take us home on Sunday—in three days! Hannah, do you know I never before believed that this would be! I always thought that to be acknowledged as the wife of Herman Brudenell—placed at the head of his establishment, settled in that magnificent house, with superb furniture and splendid dresses, and costly jewels, and carriages, and horses, and servants to attend me, and to be called Mrs. Brudenell of Brudenell Hall, and visited by the old country families—was a great deal too much happiness, and prosperity, and glory for poor me!"

"Do you believe it now?" inquired Hannah, thoughtfully.

"Why, yes! now that it draws so near. There is not much that can happen between this and Sunday to prevent it. I said it was only three days—but in fact it is only two, for this is Thursday *evening*, and he will take us home on Sunday *morning*; so you see there is only two whole days—Friday and Saturday—between this and that!"

"And how do you feel about this great change of fortune? Are you still frightened, though no longer unbelieving?"

"No, indeed!" replied Nora, glancing up at the little looking-glass that hung immediately opposite to her wheel; "if I have pleased Herman, who is so fastidious, it is not likely that I should disgust others. And mind this, too: I pleased Herman in my homespun gown, and when I meet his friends at Brudenell Hall, I shall have all the advantages of splendid dress. No, Hannah, I am no longer incredulous or frightened. And if ever, when sitting at the head of his table when there is a dinner party, my heart should begin to fail me, I will say to myself, 'I pleased Herman—the noblest of you all,' and then I know my courage will return. But, Hannah, won't people be astonished when they find out that *I*, poor Nora Worth, am really and truly Mrs. Herman Brudenell!! What *will* they say? What will old Mrs. Jones say? And oh! what will the Miss Mervins say? I should like to see *their* faces when they hear it! for you know it is reported that Colonel Mervin is to marry Miss Brudenell, and that the two Miss Mervins are secretly pulling caps who shall take Herman! Poor young ladies! won't they be dumb-foundered when they find out that poor Nora Worth has had him all this time! I wonder how long it will take them to get over the mortification, and also whether they will call to see me. Do you think they will, Hannah?"

"I do not know, my dear. The Mervins hold their heads very high," replied the sober elder sister.

"*Do* they! Well, I fancy they have not much right to hold their heads much higher than the Brudenells of Brudenell Hall hold theirs. Hannah, do you happen to know who our first ancestor was?"

"Adam, my dear, I believe."

"Nonsense, Hannah; I do not mean the first father of all mankind—I mean the head of *our* house."

"Our house? Indeed, my dear, I don't even know who our grand-father was."

"Fudge, Hannah, I am not talking of the Worths, who of course have no history. I am talking of *our* family—the Brudenells!"

"Oh!" said Hannah, dryly.

"And now do you know who our first ancestor was?"

"Yes; some Norman fillibuster who came over to England with William the Conqueror, I suppose. I believe, from all I have heard, *that* to have been the origin of most of the noble English families and old Maryland ones."

"No, you don't, neither. Herman says our family is much older than the Conquest. They were a noble race of Saxon chiefs that held large sway in England from the time of the first invasion of the Saxons to that of the Norman Conquest; at which period a certain Wolfbold waged such successful war against the invader and held out so long and fought so furiously as to have received the surname of 'Bred-in-hell!'"

"Humph! do you call *that* an honor, or *him* a respectable ancestor?"

"Yes, indeed! because it was for no vice or crime that they gave him that surname, but because it was said no man born of woman could have exhibited such frantic courage or performed such prodigies of valor as he did. Well, anyway, that was the origin of our family name. From Bred-in-hell it became Bredinell, then Bredenell, and finally, as it still sounded rough for the name of a respectable family, they have in these latter generations softened it down into Brudenell. So you see! I should like to detect the Mervins looking down upon *us!*" concluded Nora, with a pretty assumption of dignity.

"But, my dear, you are not a Brudenell."

"I don't care! My husband is, and Herman says a wife takes rank from her husband! As Nora Worth, or as Mrs. Herman Brudenell, of course I am the very same person; but then, ignorant as I may be, I know enough of the world to feel sure that those who despised Nora Worth will not dare to slight Mrs. Herman Brudenell!"

"Take care! Take care, Nora, dear! 'Pride goeth before a fall, and a haughty temper before destruction!'" said Hannah, in solemn warning.

"Well, I will not be proud if I can help it; yet—how hard to help it! But I will not let it grow on me. I will remember my humble origin and my undeserving of anything better."

At this moment the latch of the door was raised and Jem Morris presented himself, taking off his hat and bowing low, as he said:

"Evening, Miss Hannah; evening, Miss Nora. Hopes you finds yourselves well?"

"Why, law, Professor is that *you?* You have just come in time. Hannah wants you to put a new bottom in her tin saucepan and a new cover on her umbrella, and to mend her coffee-mill; it won't grind at all!" said Nora.

"*Yes*, Miss; soon's ever I gets the time. See, I've got a well to dig at Colonel Mervin's, and a chimney to build at Major Blackistone's, and a hearth to lay at Commodore Burgh's, and a roof to put over old Mrs. Jones's; and see, that will take me all the rest of the week," objected Jem.

"But can't you take the things home with you and do them at night?" inquired Hannah.

"*Yes*, Miss; but you see there's only three nights more this week, and I am engaged for all! To-night I've got to go and sit up long of old uncle Jem Brown's corpse, and to-morrow night to play the fiddle at Miss Polly Hodges' wedding, and next night I promised to be one of the waiters at the college ball, and even Sunday night aint free, 'cause our preacher is sick and I've been invited to take his place and read a *sermon and lead the* [illegible]*ers! So you see I couldn't possibly me*[illegible]*e coffee-mill and the* rest till sometime next week no how!"

"I tell you what, Morris, you have the monopoly of your line of business in this neighborhood, and so you put on airs and make people wait. I wish to goodness we could induce some other professor of odd jobs to come and settle among us," said Nora archly.

"*Yes*, Miss; I wish you could, for I am pretty nearly run offen my feet," Jem agreed. "But what I was wishing to say to you, Miss," he added, "was that the madam sent me here with a message to you."

"*Who* sent a message, Jem?"

"The madam up yonder, Miss."

"Oh! you mean Mrs. Brudenell! It was to Hannah, I suppose, in relation to work," said Nora.

"*Yes*, Miss; but this time it was not to Miss Hannah; it was to *you*, Miss Nora. 'Go up to the hut on the hill, and request Nora Worth to come up to see me this evening. I wish to have a talk with her?' Such were the madam's words, Miss Nora."

"*Oh, Hannah!*" breathed Nora in terror.

"What can she want with my sister?" enquired Hannah.

"Well, yes, Miss. She didn't say any further. And now, ladies, as I have declared my message, I must bid you good evening; as they expects me round to old uncle Jem Brown's to watch to-night." And with a deep bow the Professor retired.

"*Oh, Hannah!*" wailed Nora, hiding her head in her sister's bosom.

"Well, my dear, what is the matter?"

"I am so frightened."

"What at?"

"The thoughts of Mrs. Brudenell!"

"Then don't go. You are not a slave to be at that lady's beck and call, I reckon!"

"Yes, but I am Herman's wife and her daughter, and I will not slight her request! I will go, Hannah, though I had rather plunge into ice water this freezing weather than meet that proud lady!" said Nora, shivering.

"Child, you need not do so! You are not bound! You owe no duty to Mrs. Brudenell, until Mr. Brudenell has acknowledged you as his wife and Mrs. Brudenell as her daughter."

"Hannah, it may be so; yet she *is* my mother-in-law, being dear Herman's mother; and though I am frightened at the thought of meeting her, still I love her; I do, indeed, Hannah! and my heart longs for her love! Therefore I must not begin by disregarding her requests. I will go! But oh, Hannah! what can she want with *me?* Do you think it possible that she has heard anything? Oh, suppose she were to say anything to me about Herman? What should I do!" cried Nora, her teeth fairly chattering with nervousness.

"Don't go, I say, you are cold and trembling with fear; it is also after sunset, too late for you to go out alone."

"Yes; but, Hannah, I must go! I am not afraid of the *night!* I am afraid of *her!* But if you do not think it well for me to go alone, you can go with me, you know. There will be no harm in that, I suppose?"

"It is a pity Herman had not staid a little longer, we might have asked him; I do not think he would have been in favor of your going."

"I do not know; but, as there is no chance of consulting him, I must do what I think right in the case and obey his mother," said Nora, rising from her position in Hannah's lap and going to make some change in her simple dress. When she was ready she asked:

"Are you going with me, Hannah?"

"Surely, my child," said the elder sister, reaching her bonnet and shawl.

The weather was intensely cold, and in going to Brudenell the sisters had to face a fierce north-west wind. In walking through the valley they were sheltered by the wood; but in climbing the hill upon the opposite side they could scarcely keep their feet against the furious blast.

They reached the house at last. Hannah remembered to go to the servants' door.

"Ah, Hannah! they little think that when *next* I come to Brudenell it will be in my own carriage, which will draw up at the main entrance," said Nora with exultant pride, as she blew her cold fingers while they waited to be admitted.

The door was opened by Jovial, who started back at the sight of the sisters and exclaimed:

"Hi, Miss Hannah and Miss Nora, *you* here? Loramity sake come in and lemme shet the door. Dere, go to de fire, chillern! Name o' de law what fetch you out dis bitter night? Wind sharp nuff to peel de skin right offen your faces!"

"Your mistress sent word that she wished to see Nora this evening, Jovial. Will you please to let her know that we are here?" asked Hannah, as she and her sister seated themselves beside the roaring hickory fire in the ample kitchen fire-place.

"Sartain, Miss Hannah! Anything to obligate the ladies," said Jovial, as he left the kitchen to do his errand.

Before the sisters had time to thaw, their messenger re-entered, saying:

"Mistess will 'ceive Miss Nora into de drawing room."

Nora arose in trepidation to obey the summons.

Jovial led her along a spacious, well-lighted passage, through an open door, on the left side of which she saw the dining-room and the dinner-table, at which Mr. Brudenell and his gentlemen guests still sat lingering over their wine. His back was towards the door, so that he could not see her, or know who was at that time passing. But as *her* eyes fell upon *him*, a glow of love and pride warmed and strengthened her heart, and she said:

"After all, he is my husband and this is my house! Why should I be afraid to meet the lady mother?"

And with a firm, elastic step, Nora entered the drawing-room. At first she was dazzled and bewildered by its splendor and luxury. It was fitted up with almost oriental magnificence. Her feet seemed to sink among blooming flowers in the soft rich texture of the carpet. Her eyes fell upon crimson velvet curtains that swept in massive folds from ceiling to floor; upon rare full length pictures that filled up the recesses between the gorgeously draped windows; broad crystal mirrors above the marble mantel-shelves; marble statuettes wherever there was a corner to hold one; soft crimson velvet sofas, chairs, ottomans and stools; inlaid tables; papier-maché stands; and all the thousand miscellaneous vanities of a modern drawing-room.

"And to think that all this is *mine!* and how little she dreams of it!" said Nora, in an awe-struck whisper to her own heart, as she gazed around upon all this wealth until at last her eye fell upon the stately form of the lady as she sat alone upon a sofa at the back of the room.

"Come here, my girl, if you please," said Mrs. Brudenell.

Nora advanced timidly until she had reached to within a yard of the lady, when she stopped, curtsied, and stood with folded hands waiting, pretty much as a child would stand when called up before its betters for examination.

"Your name is Nora Worth, I believe," said the lady.

"My name is Nora, madam," answered the girl.

"You are Hannah Worth's younger sister?"

"Yes, madam."

"Now, then, my girl, do you know why I have sent for you here to-night?"

"No, madam."

"Are you sure that your conscience does not warn you?"

Nora was silent.

"Ah! I have my answer!" remarked the lady in a low voice; then raising her tone she said:

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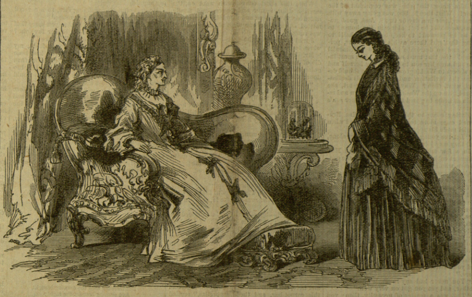

MADAME BRUDENELL AND NORA.

"I believe that my son, Mr. Herman Brudenell, is in the habit of daily visiting your house; is it not so?"

Nora looked up at the lady for an instant and then dropped her eyes.

"Quite sufficient! Now, my girl, as by your silence you have admitted all my suppositions, I must speak to you very seriously. And in the first place I would ask you, if you do not know, that when a gentleman of Mr. Brudenell's high position takes notice of a girl of your low rank, he does so with but one purpose? Answer me!"

"I do not understand you, madam."

"Very well, then, I will speak more plainly! Are you not aware, I would say, that when Herman Brudenell visits Nora Worth daily for months he means her no good?"

Nora paused for a moment to turn this question over in her mind before replying.

"I can not think, madam, that Mr. Herman Brudenell could mean anything but good to any creature, however humble, whom he deigned to notice!"

"You are a natural fool, or a very artful girl; one or the other!" said the lady, who was not very choice in her language when speaking in anger to her inferiors.

"You admit by your silence that Mr. Brudenell has been visiting you daily for months; and yet you imply that in doing so he means you no harm! *I* should think he meant your utter ruin!"

"Mrs. Brudenell!!" exclaimed Nora in a surprise so sorrowful and indignant that it made her forget herself and her fears, "you are speaking of your own son, your only son; you are his mother, how *can* you accuse him of a base crime?"

"Recollect yourself, my girl! You surely forget the presence in which you stand! Baseness, crime, can never be connected with the name of Brudenell. But young gentlemen will be young gentlemen and amuse themselves with just such credulous fools as you!" said the lady haughtily.

"Although their amusement ends in the utter ruin of its subject! Do you not call that a crime?"

"Girl! keep your place, if you please! Twice you have ventured to call me Mrs. Brudenell. To *you* I am madam. Twice you have asked me questi[illegible] answer, not to ask!"

"Pardon me, madam, if I have offended you through my ignorance of forms," said Nora, bowing with gentle dignity; for somehow or other she was gaining self-possession every moment.

"Will you answer my questions then; or continue to evade them?"

"I can answer you so far, madam—Mr. Brudenell has never attempted to amuse himself at the expense of Nora Worth; nor is *she* one to permit herself to become the subject of any man's amusement, whether he be gentle or simple!"

"And yet he visits you daily, and you permit his visits! And this has gone on for months! You cannot deny it—you do not attempt to deny it!" She paused, as if waiting some reply; but Nora kept silence.

"And yet you say he is not amusing himself at your expense!"

"He is not, madam; nor would I permit any one to do so!"

"I do not understand this! Girl! answer me! *What are you to my son?*"

Nora was silent.

"Answer me!" said the lady, severely.

"I cannot, madam! Oh, forgive me, but I cannot answer you!" said Nora.

The lady looked fixedly at her for a few seconds; something in the girl's appearance startled her; rising, she advanced and pulled the heavy shawl from Nora's shoulders, and regarded her with an expression of mingled hauteur, anger and scorn.

Nora dropped her head upon her breast and covered her blushing face with both hands.

"*I am answered!*" said the lady, throwing the shawl upon the floor and touching the bell.

Jovial answered the summons.

"Put this vile creature out of the house, and if she ever dares to show her face upon these premises again, send for a constable and have her taken up," said Mrs. Brudenell, hoarsely and white with suppressed rage, as she pointed to the shrinking girl before her.

"Come, Miss Nora, honey," whispered the old man, kindly, as he picked up the shawl and put it over her shoulders and took her hand to lead her from the room; for, ah! old Jovial as well as his fellow-servants, had good cause to know and understand the "white heat" of their mistress' anger.

As with downcast eyes and shrinking form Nora followed her conductor through the central passage and past the dining-room door, she once more saw Herman Brudenell still sitting with his friends at the table.

"Ah, if he did but know what I have had to bear within the last few minutes!" she said to herself as she hurried by.

When she re-entered the kitchen, she drew the shawl closer around her shivering figure, pulled the bonnet farther over her blushing face, and silently took the arm of Hannah to return home.

The elder sister asked no question. And when they had left the house their walk was as silent as their departure had been. It required all their attention to hold their course through the darkness of the night, the intensity of the cold and the fury of the wind. It was not until they had reached the shelter of their poor hut, drawn the firebrands together and sat down before the cheerful blaze, that Nora threw herself sobbing into the arms of her sister.

Hannah gathered her child closer to her heart and caressed her in silence until her fit of sobbing had exhausted itself, and then she inquired:

"What did Mrs. Brudenell want with you, dear?"

"Oh, Hannah, she had heard of Herman's visits here! She questioned and cross-questioned me. I would not admit anything, but then I could not deny anything either. I could give her no satisfaction, because you know my tongue was tied by my promise. Then she suspected me of being a bad girl. And she cross-questioned me more severely than ever. Still I could give her no satisfaction. And her suspicions seemed to be confirmed. And she looked at me—oh! with such terrible eyes, that they seemed to burn me up. I know, not only my poor face, but the very tips of my ears seemed on fire. And suddenly she snatched my shawl off me, and oh! if her look was terrible before, it was consuming now! Hannah, I seemed to shrivel all up in the glare of that look, like some poor worm in the flame!" gasped Nora, with a spasmodic catch of her breath, as she once more clung to the neck of her sister.

"What next?" curtly inquired Hannah.

"She rang the bell and ordered Jovial to 'put this vile creature (meaning me) out;' and if ever I dared to show my face on the premises again, to send for a constable to take me up."

"The insolent woman!" exclaimed the elder sister, with a burst of very natural indignation. "She will have you taken up by a constable if ever you show your face there again, will she? We'll see that! I shall tell Herman Brudenell all about it to-morrow as soon as he comes! He must not wait until his mother goes to Washington! He must acknowledge you as his wife immediately. To-morrow morning he must take you up and introduce you as such to his mother. If there is to be an explosion, let it come! The lady must be taught to know who it is that she has branded with ill names, driven from the house and threatened with a constable! She must learn that it is an honorable wife whom she has called a vile creature; the mistress of the house whom she turned out of doors, and finally that it is Mrs. Herman Brudenell whom she has threatened with a constable!" Hannah had spoken with such vehemence and rapidity that Nora had found no opportunity to stop her. She could not, to use a common phrase, "get in a word edgeways." It was only now when Hannah paused for breath that Nora took up the discourse with:

"Hannah! Hannah! Hannah! how you *do* go on! Tell Herman Brudenell about his own mother's treatment of me, indeed! I will never forgive you if you do, Hannah! Do you think it will be such a pleasant thing for him to hear? Consider how much it would hurt him and perhaps estrange him from his mother too! And what! shall *I* do anything, or consent to anything, to set my husband against his own mother? Never, Hannah! I would rather remain forever in my present obscurity. Besides consider, she was not so much to blame for her treatment of me! You know she never imagined such a thing as that her son had actually married me, and——"

—"*I* should have told her!" interrupted Hannah, vehemently. "I should not have borne her evil charges for one moment in silence! I should have soon let her know who and what I was! I should have taken possession of my rightful place then and there! I should have rung a bell and sent for Mr. Herman Brudenell and had it out with the old lady once for all!"

"Hannah, I could not! my tongue was tied by my promise, and besides——"

—"It was *not* tied!" again dashed in the elder sister, whose unusual vehemence of mood seemed to require her to do all the talking herself. "Herman Brudenell—he is a generous fellow with all his faults!—released both you and myself from our promise, and told us at any time when we should feel that the marriage ought not any longer to be kept secret, it might be divulged. You should have told"

"What! and raised a storm there between mother and son? when both those high spirits would have become so inflamed that they would have said things to each other that neither could ever forgive? What? cause a rupture between them that never could be closed?—No indeed, Hannah! Burned and shrivelled up as I was with shame in the glare of that lady's scornful look, I would not save myself at such a cost to *him* and—*to her*. For though you mayn't believe me, Hannah, I *love* that lady! I do in spite of her scorn! She is my husband's mother; I love her as I should have loved my own. And, oh, while she was scorching me up with her scornful looks and words, how I did long to show her that I was not the unworthy creature she deemed me, but a poor, honest, loving girl who adored both her and her son, and who would, for the love I bore them——"

"'Die,' if necessary, I suppose! That is just about what foolish lovers promise to do for each other," said the elder sister, impatiently.

"Well, I *would*, Hannah; though that is not what I meant to say; I meant that for the love I bore them I would so strive to improve in every respect that I should at last lift myself to their level and be worthy of them!"

"Humph! and you can rest under this ban of reproach!"

"No, not rest, Hannah! no one can rest in fire! and reproach is fire to me! but I can bear it, knowing it to be undeserved! For, Hannah, even when I stood shrivelling in the blaze of that lady's presence, the feeling of innocence, deep in my heart, kept me from death! for I think, Hannah, if I had deserved her reproaches I should have dropped, blackened, at her feet! Dear sister, I am very sorry I told you anything about it. Only I have never kept anything from you, and so the force of habit and my own swelling heart that overflowed with trouble made me do it. Be patient now, Hannah! Say nothing to my dear husband of this. In two days the lady and her daughters will be in Washington. Herman will take us home, acknowledge me and write to his mother. There will then be no outbreak; both will command their tempers better when they are apart! And there will be nothing said or done that need make an irreparable breach between the mother and son, or between her and myself. Promise me, Hannah, that you will say nothing to Herman about it to-morrow!"

"I promise you, Nora; but only because the time draws so very near when you will be acknowledged without any interference on my part."

"And now, dear sister, about you and Reuben. Have you told him of Mr. Brudenell's offer?"

"Yes, dear."

"And he will accept it?"

"Yes."

"And when shall you be married?"

"The very day that you shall be settled in your new home, dear. We both thought that best. I do not wish to go to Brudenell, Nora. Nothing can ever polish me into a fine lady; so I should be out of place there even for a day. Besides it would be awkward on account of the house-servants, who have always looked upon me as a sort of companion because I have been their fellow-laborer in busy times. And they would not know how to treat me if they found me in the drawing-room or at the dinner-table! With you it is different; you are naturally refined! You have never worked out of our own house; you are their master's wife, and they will respect you as such. But as for me, I am sure I should embarrass everybody if I should go to Brudenell. And on the other hand, I can not remain here by myself. So I have taken Reuben's advice and agreed to walk with him to the church the same hour that Mr. Brudenell takes you home."

"That will be early Sunday morning."

"Yes, dear!"

"Well, God bless you, best of mother-sisters! May you have much happiness," said Nora, as she raised herself from Hannah's knees to prepare for rest.

CHAPTER VIII.

END OF THE SECRET MARRIAGE.

Upon her stubborn brow alone
Nor ruth nor mercy's trace is shown.
Her look is hard and stern.
SCOTT.

After the departure of Nora Worth, Mrs. Brudenell seated herself upon the sofa, leaned her elbow upon the little stand at her side, bowed her head upon her hand and fell into deep thought. Should she speak to Herman Brudenell of this matter?—No! it was too late; affairs had gone too far; they must now take their course; the foolish girl's fate must be on her own head, and on that of her carelesss elder sister; they would both be ruined, that was certain; no respectable family would ever employ either of them again; they would starve; well, so much the better! they would be a warning to other girls of their class, not to throw out their nets to catch gentlemen! Herman had been foolish, wicked even, but then young men will be young men; and then, again, of course it was that artful creature's fault! What could *she*, his mother, do in the premises? Not speak to her son upon the subject, certainly; not even let him know that she was cognizant of the affair! What then? She was going away with her daughters in a day or two! And, good gracious, *he* would be left alone in the house! to do as he pleased! to keep bachelor's hall! to bring that girl there as his housekeeper, perhaps, and so desecrate his sacred, patrimonial home! No, that must never be! She must invite and urge her son to accompany herself and his sisters to Washington. But if he should decline the invitation and persist in his declination, what then? Why, as a last resort, she would give up the Washington campaign and remain at home to guard the sanctity of her son's house.

Having come to this conclusion, Mrs. Brudenell once more touched the bell, and when Jovial made his appearance she said:

"Let the young ladies know that I am alone, and they may join me now."

In a few minutes Miss Brudenell and Miss Eleanora entered the room, followed by the gentlemen who had just left the dinner-table.

Coffee was immediately served, and soon after the guests took leave.

The young ladies also left the drawing-room, and retired to their chambers to superintend the careful packing of some fine lace and jewelry. The mother and son remained alone together—Mrs. Brudenell seated upon her favorite back sofa, and Herman walking slowly and thoughtfully up and down the whole length of the room.

"Herman," said the lady.

"Well, mother?"

"I have been thinking about our winter in Washington. I have been reflecting that myself and your sisters will have no natural protector there."

"You never had any in Paris or in London, mother, and yet you got on very well."

"That was a matter of necessity, then; you were a youth at college; we could not have your company; but now you are a young man, and your place, until you marry, is with me and my daughters. We shall need your escort, dear Herman, and be happier for your company. I should be very glad if I could induce you to accompany us to the city."

"And I should be very glad to do so, dear mother, but for the engagements that bind me here."

She did not ask the very natural question of what those engagements might be. She did not wish to let him see that she knew or suspected his attachment to Nora Worth, so she answered:

"You refer to the improvements and additions you mean to add to Brudenell Hall. Surely these repairs had better be deferred until the spring, when the weather will be more favorable for such work?"

"My dear mother, all the alterations I mean to have made *inside* the house can very well be done this winter. By the next summer I hope to have the whole place in complete order for you and my sisters to return and spend the warm weather with me."

The lady lifted her head. She had never known her son to be guilty of the least insincerity. If he had looked forward to the coming of herself and her daughters to Brudenell, to spend the next summer, he could not, of course, be contemplating the removal of Nora Worth to the house.

"Then you really expect us to make this our home, as heretofore, every summer?" she said.

"I have no right to *expect* such a favor, my dear mother; but I sincerely hope for it," said the son, courteously.

"But it is not every young bachelor living on his own estate who cares to be restrained by the presence of his mother and sisters; such generally desire a life of more freedom and gaiety than would be proper with ladies in the house," said Mrs. Brudenell.

"But I am not one of those, mother; you know that my habits are very domestic."

"Yes. Well, Herman, it may just as well be understood that myself and the girls *will* return here to spend the summer. But now—the previous question! Can you not be prevailed on to accompany us to Washington?"

"My dear mother! anything on earth to oblige you I would do, if possible! But see! you go on Saturday, and this is Thursday night. There is but one intervening day. I could not make the necessary arrangements. I have much business to transact with my overseer; the whole year's accounts still to examine, and other duties to do before I could possibly leave home. But I tell you what I can do; I can hurry up these matters, and join you in Washington at the end of the week, in full time to escort you and my sisters to that grand national ball, of which I hear them incessantly talking."

"And remain with us for the winter?"

"If you shall continue to wish it, and if I can find a builder, decorator and upholster whom I can send down to Brudenell Hall, to make the improvements, and whom I can trust to carry out my ideas."

The lady's heart leaped for joy! It was all right then! he was willing to leave the neighborhood! he had no particular attractions here! his affections were not involved! his acquaintance with that girl had been only a piece of transient folly, of which he was probably sick and tired! These were her thoughts as she thanked her son for his ready acquiescence in her wishes.

Meanwhile what were his purposes? To conciliate his mother by every concession except *one!* to let her depart from his house with the best feelings towards himself! then to write to her and announce his marriage; plead his great love as its excuse, and implore her forgiveness; then to keep his word and go to Washington, taking Nora with him, and remain for the winter if his mother should still desire him to do so.

A few moments longer the mother and son remained in the drawing-room before separating for the night—Mrs. Brudenell seated on her sofa and Herman walking slowly up and down the floor. Then the lady arose to retire, and Herman lighted a bed-room candle and put it in her hand.

When she had bidden him good-night, and left the room, he resumed his slow and thoughtful walk. It was very late, and Jovial opened the door for the purpose of entering and putting out the lights; but seeing his master still walking up and down the floor, he retired, and sat yawning while he waited in the hall without.

The clock upon the mantelpiece struck one, and Herman Brudenell lighted his own candle to retire, when his steps were arrested by a sound—a common one enough at other hours and places, only unprecedented at that hour and in that place. It was the roll of carriage wheels upon the drive approaching the house.

Who could possibly be coming to this remote country mansion at one o'clock at night? While Herman Brudenell paused in expectancy, taper in hand, Jovial once more opened the door and looked in.

"Jovial, is that the sound of carriage wheels, or do I only fancy so?" asked the young man.

"Carriage wheels, marser, coming right to de house, too!" answered the negro.

"Who on earth can be coming here at this hour of the night? We have not an acquaintance intimate enough with us to take such a liberty. And it cannot be a belated traveller, for we are miles from any public road."

"Dat's jes' what I been a-sayin' to myself, sir. But we shall find out now directly."

While this short conversation went on, the carriage drew nearer and nearer, and finally rolled up to the door and stopped. Steps were rattled down, some one alighted, and the bell was rung.

Jovial flew to open the door—curiosity giving wings to his feet.

Mr. Brudenell remained standing in the middle of the drawing-room, attentive to what was going on without. He heard Jovial open the door; then a woman's voice inquire:

"Is this Brudenell Hall?"

"In course it is, Miss."

"And are the family at home?"

"Yes, Miss, dey most, in gen'al, *is* at dis hour ob de night, dough dey don't expect wisiters."

"Are *all* the family here?"

"Dey *is*, Miss."

"All right, coachman, you can take off the luggage," said the woman, and then her voice, sounding softer and farther off, spoke to some one still within the carriage: "We are quite right, my lady; this is Brudenell Hall; the family are all at home, and have not yet retired. Shall I assist your ladyship to alight?"

"Then a soft, low voice replied:

"Yes, thank you, Phœbe. But first give the dressing-bag to the man to take in, and you carry Fidelle."

"Bub—bub—bub—bub—*but*," stammered the appalled Jovial, with his arms full of lap-dogs and dressing-bags that the woman had forced upon him, "you better some of you send in your names, and see if it won't be ill-convenient to the fam'ly, afore you 'spects me to denounce a whole coach full of travellers to my masser! Who *is* you all, anyhow, young woman?"

"My lady will soon let you know who she is! Be careful of that dog! you are squeezing her! and here, take this shawl, and this bird-cage, and this carpet-bag, and these umbrellas," replied the woman, overwhelming him with luggage. "Here, coachman! bring that large trunk into the hall! And come now, my lady; the luggage is all right."

As for Jovial, he dropped lap-dogs, bird-cages, carpet-bags and umbrellas plump upon the hall floor, and rushed into [illegible] drawing-room, exclaiming:

"Masser, it's an invasion of de Goffs and Wandalls, or some other sich furriners! And I think de milishy ought to be called out."

"Don't be a fool, if you please. These are travellers who have missed their way, and are in need of shelter this bitter night. Go at once, and show them in here, and then wake up the housekeeper to prepare refreshments," said Mr. Brudenell.

"It is not my wishes to act foolish, marser; but it's enough to constunnate the sensoriest person to be tumbled in upon dis way at dis hour ob de night by a whole raft of strangers—men, and women, and dogs, and cats, and birds included!" mumbled Jovial, as he went to do his errand.

But his services as gentleman usher seemed not to be needed by the stranger, for as he left the drawing-room, a lady entered, followed by a waiting maid.

The lady was clothed in deep mourning, with a thick crape veil concealing her face.

As Herman advanced to welcome her, she threw aside her veil, revealing a pale, sad, young face, shaded by thick curls of glossy black hair.

At the sight of that face, the young man started back, the pallor of death overspreading his countenance as he sunk upon the nearest sofa, breathing in a dying voice:

"Berenice!—*You* here! Is it *you?* Oh, Heaven have pity on us!"

"Phœbe, go and find out the housekeeper, explain who I am, and have my luggage taken up to my apartment. Then order tea in this room," said the lady, perhaps with the sole view of getting rid of her attendant; for as soon as the latter had withdrawn, she threw off her bonnet, went to the overwhelmed young man, sat down beside him, put her arms around him, and drew his head down to meet her own, as she said, caressingly:

"You did not expect me, love? And my arrival has overcome you."

"I thought you had been killed in that railway collision," came in hoarse and guttural tones from a throat that seemed suddenly parched to ashes.

"Poor Herman! and you had rallied from that shock of grief; but was not strong enough to sustain a shock of joy! I ought not to have given you this surprise. But try now to compose yourself, and give me welcome. I am here; alive, warm, loving, hungry even! a woman, and no spectre risen from the grave, although you look at me just as if I were one! Dear, Herman, kiss me! I have come a long way to join you!" she said, in a voice softer than the softest notes of the cushat dove.

"How was it that you were not killed?" demanded the young man, with the manner of one who exacted an apology for a grevious wrong.

"My dearest Herman, I came very near being crushed to death; all that were in the same carriage with me, perished. I was so seriously injured that I was reported among the killed; but the report was contradicted in the next day's paper."

"How was it that you were *not* killed, I asked you?"

"My dearest one, I suppose it was the will of Heaven that I should not be. I do not know any other reason."

"Why did you not write and tell me you had escaped?"

"Dear Herman, how hoarsely you speak! And how ill you look! I fear you have a very bad cold!" said the stranger tenderly.

"Why did you not write and tell me of your escape, I ask you? Why did you permit me to believe for months that you were no longer in life?"

"Herman, I thought surely if you should have seen the announcement of my death in one paper, you would see it contradicted, as it was, in half a dozen others. And as for writing, I was incapable of that for months! Among other injuries, my right hand was crushed, Herman. And that it has been saved at all, is owing to a miracle of medical skill!"

"Why did you not get some one else to write, then?"

"Dear Herman, you forget! There was no one in our secret! I had no confidante at all! Besides, as soon as I could be moved, my father took me to Paris, to place me under the care of a celebrated surgeon there. Poor father! he is dead now, Herman! He left me all his money. I am one among the richest heiresses in England. But it is all yours now, dear Herman. When I closed my poor father's eyes my hand was still too stiff to wield a pen! And still, though there was no longer any reason for mystery, I felt that I would rather come to you at once than employ the pen of another to write. That is the reason, dear Herman, why I have been so long silent, and why at last I arrive so unexpectedly. I hope it is satisfactory. But what is the matter, Herman? You do not seem to be yourself! You have not welcomed me! you have not kissed me! you have not even called me by my name, since I first came in! Oh! can it be possible that after all, you are not glad to see me!" she exclaimed, rising from her caressing posture, and standing sorrowly before him. Her face that had looked pale and sad from the first, was now convulsed by some passing anguish.

He looked at that suffering face, then covered his eyes with his hands and groaned.

"What is this, Herman? Are you sorry that I have come? Do you no longer love me? What is the matter? Oh, speak to me!"

"The matter is—RUIN! I am a felon, my lady! And it were better that you had been crushed to death in that railway collision than lived to rejoin me here! I am a wretch, too base to live! And I wish the earth would open beneath our feet and swallow us!"

The lady stepped back, appalled, and before she could think of a reply, the door opened and Mrs. Brudenell, who had been awakened by the disturbance, sailed into the room.

"It is my mother!" said the young man, struggling for composure. And rising, he took the hand of the stranger and led her to the elder lady, saying:

"This is the Countess of Hurstmonceux, madam; I commend her to your care."

And having done this, he turned and abruptly left the room and the house.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

LOVE'S MISERY.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

I know, dear one, that in this life
Our paths shall parted be,
Yet like the mariner to his star,
I still shall turn to thee;
And memory's trembling fingers shall
Upon my heart-strings play,
To recall scenes within the past,
Which were too bright to stay.

The morn of love upon us dawned
With radiant rays of light,
But morning soon the evening brought,
And evening brought the night;
And now our hopes all buried are
Within the vault of years;
While I, in grief and bitterness,
Now o'er them shed my tears.

Our paths shall ne'er unite again,
They range too far apart,
But still thine image shall remain
Within my faithful heart.
And, while I weep o'er happy scenes,
That now no more can be,
I'll sit communing with my thoughts,
And think, dear one, of thee.

LOVE IN AN EXPRESS TRAIN.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

The winter night was closing, dark and drear, around the tumult and bustle of the railroad station in the heart of the great city. Mothers were there, bidding adieu to their little children—husbands parting from their wives—old, experienced travellers, to whom it seemed a mere trifle to skim half across the continent on the wings of steam, and nervous, uncertain voyagers, to whom the briefest journey appeared fraught with indescribable peril. These were the tableaux exhibited within the gaslighted waiting-room, while without the snow-fell, white and ceaselessly, and the fiery eye of the locomotive threw a line of light through the darkness for yards around.

Hugh Southbank was walking slowly up and down the platform, with his arm resting carelessly on the shoulder of Alfred Neville, his dearest and oldest friend. Both were wrapped to the very throat in furs and broadcloth, and, even had it not been so, they were far too much absorbed in their own thoughts and conversation to heed the driving snow or cutting wind.

"So you are really setting forth on your travels, Hugh!" exclaimed Neville. "And when shall you return home?"

"I can scarcely tell—certainly not in many years and perhaps never. I may become a Russian, or possibly pitch my tent among the palmtrees of Palestine."

"Hugh," said his friend turning so as to look into the dark eyes that were partially hidden by the fur-trimmed cap of the traveler, "I remember when you were the quietest and most homeloving of prosaic individuals. What has changed you, so entirely, during the last ten years?"

"Time works changes in us all," returned Southbank, evasively.

"Hugh!" said Neville reproachfully, "surely we have not been fast friends for twenty years for you to deny me your confidence at last?"

"I have no secrets from you, Neville," replied Hugh, somewhat softened by the earnestness of his friend's appeal.

"Nor am I unwilling to confess to you that the whole current of my life has been changed, since that unlucky lover's quarrel with Edith Sayre, six years ago. We both acted very like a couple of foolish children. I was passionate and overbearing—she was petulant and wilful—and so we parted."

"And what has become of her."

"She married Charles Calthorpe years ago, and I have long lost sight of her. I have sometimes wondered whether the man to whom she has given her hand, has loved her as truly and tenderly as *I* should have done!"

"Why don't you follow her example, my boy, and take unto *yourself* a wife?"

Southbank shrugged his shoulders.

"I am constituted somewhat like the tree I have somewhere read of that blossoms but once in a life-time. I could no more love a second time than I could be born twice!"

"Pity!" observed Neville, "when there are so many manœuvring mammas and sentimental daughters who would appreciate your six feet of manhood and your snug little fortune! Hallo! here comes your train! In with you, old fellow—drop me a line now and then, just to let me know that you haven't turned Mussulman at Constantinople, or taken to tiger-hunting in the jungles of Bengal."

There was a cordial grasp of two earnest hands—a farewell spoken almost beneath the breath—and then Alfred Neville stood alone on the platform, a mist that was not the dew of melting snow-flakes before his eyes, and the express train was speeding away through the gloom and darkness of the winter night.

"Is this seat engaged, sir?"

Hugh Southbank answered in the negative, almost petulantly, for the conductor's voice roused him from a deep reverie into which he had fallen. The twilight of the half-illumined car, the heated atmosphere within and the swift, tremulous motion of the train, were alike favorable to dream-fancies, and it was not particularly pleasant to be roused up to make room for a lady and two little children.

"People haven't any business to be travelling with children!" grumbled the fat man with spectacles opposite, across whose outstretched feet the little four-year-old had stumbled.

"Babies are a perfect nuisance in a car!" remarked the acidulated old maid whose nerves were disturbed by the cooing of the baby-bundle whose blue eyes were just on a level with its mamma's shoulder.

And Hugh Southbank—whether out of the sheer spirit of contradiction, or from Christian charity, will never, we fear, be known—leaned forward and took the four-year-old upon his knee, while he assisted the lady to dispose of her manifold traveling bags and bundles.

"Thank you, sir!"

The words were spoken so low that Southbank scarcely caught their sound, but the rosy little boy on his knee quite made up for his mother's taciturnity by clamorously demanding to see the stranger's watch, and rubbing his velvet cheek delightfully against the costly furs which edged Hugh's traveling coat.

"Papa had a fur coat like this—papa is dead!" chattered the little fellow, lifting his brown eyes to Hugh Southbank's, with innocent confidence.

Southbank did not answer—he looked down into the liquid child-eyes with a strange feeling, akin to the revival of forgotten dreams. *Where* had he seen those eyes before?

"And mamma is going to B—— to try and earn some money for me and the baby! Mamma has only nine dollars left," went on the small chatterer, "and——"

"Hugh, dear, don't talk any more," interposed the soft, tremulous voice at Southbank's side, with an accent that thrilled him to the very heart, while a small gloved hand was laid on the child's shoulder. Southbank leaned forward to get a glimpse if possible at the face that belonged to the sweet, low voice, but it was useless—the car was too dark. Was there *no* way of reading this strange riddle?

"And what is your name, my little fellow?" he asked, a sudden inspiration coming to his aid.

"Mamma says I'm not to talk!" pouted the child, his scarlet lip thrust out with offended dignity, and looking around as if he expected the decree to be repealed.

"Tickets, if you please!" shouted the conductor, bustling down the aisle.

"Hold your lantern here a minute, my man; where *did* I put that ticket?" said Hugh, ostentatiously searching through the compartments of his pocket-book. "O, here it is—all right!"

"All right" indeed, for in the full glare of the lantern he had discovered the key to that troublesome enigma. Their eyes had met for one second—and Hugh Southbank knew that Edith Sayre was sitting beside him!"

"Mr. Southbank!" she faltered.

"Edith!"

Through the lonely winter solitudes—through glens of icicle-hung trees, and snowy ravines, and miles on miles of dreary hills and vales—darted the night-express, its iron lungs breathing columns of fiery smoke, its solitary eye of red flame cleaving the darkness like a spear. The fat man in spectacles fell asleep and snored, the old maid nodded among her pyramid of bandboxes. Long ago the child on Hugh's knee had fallen asleep, his flushed cheek resting against the sable fur upon his protector's breast—the baby's blue eyes were veiled beneath tiny slumberous lids—but neither Hugh nor Edith evinced the least tendency to drift off into dreamland! for the pale and beautiful young widow had told the simple story of her life to him who had once confidently hoped to share its vicissitudes—how she was a widow, and alone!

"But I am wearying you," she said, timidly.

"Nay, Edith," said Southbank, reproachfully. "Who should be interested in the history of your sorrows if not I?"

"It is a year to-night since Charles died," she added, "and I feel that it is my duty to exert myself at last, for the benefit of these little ones, who are left penniless. Mr. Southbank, your circle of friends is large and influential—at least I know that it *was*. Can you tell me of any situation in which, as governess or companion, I could earn a livelihood, however humble?"

Hugh was silent an instant; he could scarcely realize that this meek, timid creature was the haughty, high-spirited Edith Sayre of six years since! At length he spoke, rather nervously, for Mrs. Calthorpe's soft brown eyes were fixed with eager earnestness upon his face.

"I know of but one plan, Edith, which I could confidently recommend to you, and I fear, even in this instance, you will be unwilling to take my advice."

"I will do whatever you recommend, Hugh."

"Then, dearest, you will let the six years that have passed be but as a troublous dream, and stand once more at my side as we stood together in auld lang syne. I have never ceased to love you, Edith! shall I have no reward for my constancy? Dear love, will you forget the past and be my wife?"

"But the children, Hugh?"

"They shall be *my* children too!"

Speed on your way, fleet-winged night-express! you bear within your iron arms two hearts that have passed through the fiery ordeal of trial and suffering, to be happy at last! Speed on your way, for the dawn light is reddening the frozen earth beyond those orient hills, and the morning of perfect love is bright above the darkness of six weary years!

"Hal-lo! Who on earth expected to see you, Hugh Southbank? Why, I thought you were *en route* for the East, and was just considering the propriety of directing a letter to Stamboul, when here you turn up in Broadway!"

"I have changed all my plans, Neville, and concluded to remain quietly at home for the rest of my days."

"And what magic spell has wrought this transformation?"

"A wife. I was married yesterday morning, to Mrs. Charles Calthorpe, formerly Edith Sayre. Come round to the —— Hotel this evening, and let me introduce you to Mrs. Southbank!"

"Hold on a minute—tell me where on earth you found the lost treasure?"

"In the night-express train!"

And Hugh Southbank was gone before Neville could ask any more questions!

CHRISTIANITY.—If ever Christianity appears in its power, it is when it erects its trophies upon the tomb; when it takes up its votaries where the world leaves them; and fills the breach with immortal hope in dying moments.

DRESS.—Next to clothes being fine, they should be well made, and worn easily; for a man is only the less genteel in a fine coat, if, in wearing it, he shows a regard for it, and is not as easy in it as if it was a plain one.

THE VOICES OF THE DEAD:

PARTLY A RHYTHMED PARAPHRASE

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

The world is filled with voices of the Dead,
Not from their solemn graves, their cenotaphs,
Their monuments by Gratitude reared up
To guardian Heaven, alone they speak,
But also from the throng of life: unseen,
Yet life is with their large, grand presence filled,
As mighty forests with the viewless wind,
Whose breathing is a melody, a power,
A thing for mediation and sweet awe.

II.

By the still fireside, in the thoughtful night,
They speak to us; and in the chamber lone;
And in society's thick paths; and in the halls,
With voices of the living murmurous.

III.

The lonesome thicket and the crowded street,
The venerable walls that shake to myriad steps,
Or echo back rapt Supplication's tone,
And Adoration's chant—all are thine own.

IV.

Go where we will, the voices of the Dead
Are there: we live, we talk, we smile, we weep
With those who once lived, talked, smiled, wept with
us:
Their well-remembered tones, dear music breathed
Through Memory's sounding hall, forever sweet,
Floats with the breeze's song, the thunder's hymn,
The falling leaf, the jubilee shout of Spring,
And Summer's song of opulence: the Earth
Is filled with their long, choiring, shadowy train

V.

But deeper, broader, grander impress still!—
With the great labors of the Dead this world
Is filled and glorified, as Heaven by the stars
Of that Creative Hand, making the cloudy deep
Magnificent, that else was rayless night
And cold abstraction. Art and Science grand,
The ever-towering Fanes, the pathways of mankind,
Maxims, opinions, presidences, thrones,
These are the labors of the glorious Dead:
By these they also speak: the Universe
Is with their voices filled, and to their tone
Trembles with joy and solemn ecstasy.

THE LANSINGS.

A SKETCH OF VALENTINE'S DAY.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

It was a stormy winter day. Mary Lansing stood at the window looking out upon the dreary deserted street. Mrs. Lansing and her daughter Charlotte sat near the fire, sewing, and conversing in low tones. It was a very pleasant home-picture. The fair, still youthful-looking mother, the lovely girl of eighteen, already her companion and friend, and the pretty creature standing beside the window in that eager expectant attitude—

> "Standing with reluctant feet,
> Where the brook and river meet—
> Womanhood and childhood fleet,"—

the pet of the household, with her winsome merry ways, made up a group for an artist.

Mary drew a long breath, bending more forward, as a solitary figure made its appearance round the corner of the square, buffeting the blinding, whirling snow, hurrying along, up flights of steps at almost every door, ringing furious peals, stamping impatiently as he waited for tardy servants, then on again, to repeat the same scene. It was the postman, and this was Valentine's day. And if the poor man had been possessed of Cupid's wings, instead of his own stumbling feet, if he had been Mercury himself, he could hardly have carried all the messages which St. Valentine had inspired on this his own peculiar day.

"What are you looking at, Mary?" asked Mrs. Lansing, glancing up from her work, and perceiving how fixed was her young daughter's attention.

"At the postman, mamma. He's stopping at every door, and he has so many letters that he carries them in a great bag."

"It's Valentine's day, mamma," said Charlotte, softly, and a faint blush played across her fair cheek, and dyed her whole face crimson, as Mary exclaimed:

"He's coming here, mamma!" and then, with the impetuous curiosity of a child, ran out upon the landing to listen as Bridget opened the door.

"Miss Charlotte Lansing, two; Miss Mary Lansing, one; Bridget O'Flaherty, one," shouted the postman; "four cents, and be quick, my girl."

"Git out wid ye! That iver the likes of ye should be callin' me your gurrel—ye that has the wife and six blissid babies at home the day!" quoth Bridget, irate.

"Don't ye wish it was Patrick Murphy, the policeman, that called ye so?" retorted the postman. "But hurry up, and bring me my money, and then ye can see if 'twas Pat that sent ye this Valentine."

"Here, Bridget, are the pennies," cried Mary, gliding down the stairs, "and I'll take up the letters."

"And plaze, Miss Mary, would ye be so kind as to read mine for me?" says Bridget. "I'm just kilt with wonderin' if it's from Pat, the darlint."

"Oh, yes, I'll be down in five minutes," Mary answers, and springs up the stairs, and Bridget dives into her own subterranean regions, holding the precious Valentine at arm's length, in her exceeding and reverential delight in its possession.

The flush spread once more over Charlotte's face, and dyed even her white throat, as Mary placed the letters in her hand. One was a superbly ornamented Valentine, the expensive, ostentatious gift of one who had not even taken the precaution to disguise the hand in which the address was written—conveying no sentiment, and awakening no emotion except the pleasure which the sight of any beautiful object inspires. But the other—a plain white envelope with her name boldly but elegantly inscribed upon it—Charlotte's hand trembled as she grasped it—she cast a tender glance at the address, held it softly, almost reverently for a moment, then, with a faint sigh, hid it away in the folds of her dress. Her mother watched her silently while over her face flitted a half mournful smile, and then she turned to Mary, who was exclaiming loudly and indignantly over one of those ludicrous, comic Valentines which make one laugh spite of their exaggerated colors and unnatural forms, which some mischievous boy-lover had sent her.

"It is not worth so many words, my dear," she said, "lay it aside, or put it in the fire, and think no more about it. You should not take it so seriously."

"I'll put it away till papa comes home. I know he'll think it a shame," said Mary, "and now I'll go down and read Bridget's Valentine. She'll put pepper in the pudding and sugar on the meat if I make her wait much longer, for she was quite beside herself when I left her."

As soon as Mary had closed the door, Charlotte raised her beautiful, drooping eyes to her mother's face. Between this mother and daughter there was perfect confidence, and Charlotte replied to her mother's inquiring glance:

"He must be in town, mamma. It is a city letter," and, with a half reluctant movement, full of charming, timid grace, she laid the unopened letter upon her mother's lap.

"Read it yourself, Charlotte, and then show it to me if you wish," said Mrs. Lansing. "I am going up stairs for a little while, and you can have the room quite to yourself." And so, with rare tact and delicacy, this excellent mother withdrew. She went to her own room and sat down, a little sadly, in that solitary place, to arrange the thronging thoughts that rushed upon her. Already a shadow from the swift-coming future was projected upon her life. For eighteen years Charlotte had been all her own. The touch of her baby hands, those soft aimlessly straying hands, had first awakened in her heart the purest of earthly joys, the perfect joy of motherhood. And since, as the merry child, the joyous school-girl, the lovely young woman, each year more the companion and friend, each year showing some added grace or beauty, and growing more and more completely into her mother's life. The thought of separation had seldom come to her, and then only to be put away with a pang. But now, perhaps, even at the moment, another claimed her. In a little time, perhaps, loving and beloved, this precious child would go out from the shelter of that home, never to dwell there more. Another love, more selfish, more absorbing, succeeded the mother's. Could she yield her up? As Mrs. Lansing asked herself this question—the question many an affectionate mother has asked with anxious sorrow—she felt the tears start to her eyes. But, in the perfectness of her unselfish love, she repressed them. If Charlotte was happy, no signs of sadness on her part should mar her joy. And so she sat and silently strove with the apprehension that filled her heart.

After a time came a timid knock at the door. Charlotte stood there, tremulous, flushed, gloriously beautiful. The mother drew her in and pressed her to her bosom, and Charlotte laid her head on that tender breast which had been her refuge in every sorrow, the recipient of every joy of her brief life.

"You are happy, my child," Mrs. Lansing said, at last, half-questioning.

"Oh, mamma! so happy—he is here in the city—he is coming this evening. Oh, mamma, to think that he should want your poor little Charlotte!" and so she went on, murmuring in that loving ear the joy and the humility of her love.

"Oh, mamma, he says he has such a lovely house all prepared for me in that beautiful Western town, furnished with everything but one. Can you think what that one is, mother dear? Do you think you and papa can spare me to be his housekeeper, his—his—" and then the blushing face was hidden again.

"To be George Stanley's wife, my love. My child, I hardly think there is a man in the world worthy of my Charlotte, but George is honorable, and good, and kind. We have long expected this, my dear, and are prepared to give you to him whenever he claims you."

"Thank you, mamma; but you look sad. Would it be so hard for you to have me go away? Oh, why did I not think of that? I have no right to leave my own dear mother—the best mother girl ever had—the best home," and the happy face was saddened and tears filled the brilliant eyes.

And then it was the mother's part to be comforter, and so an hour slipped away, and then Mary came knocking at the door, curious to know what this long conference meant, and why she was excluded from it.

"The letter, mamma," then said Charlotte, lifting up her wistful, blushing face. "I should like to show it to you, but I am afraid that he would not quite like any one but me to see it"—here was the old, yet ever new, conflict of authority—how that of the parent wanes when "his" wishes are to be consulted.

"My child, I have no wish, no right even, to read Mr. Stanley's letter. A proud man unveils the innermost secrets of his heart to but one, and she ought to guard the trust with vigilance and with delicacy."

And then Charlotte went away to her own room to read that precious letter over and over, to fall into a long pleasant reverie, and then to rouse herself to the fact that she was still in her morning dress, and that by and by somebody was coming in whose eyes she wished, now and ever, to be most beautiful.

And she was beautiful when, at last, she went down dressed in soft, gleaming, blue silk and delicate laces, with her brown hair satin-smooth, and the faint flitting color in her cheek, and the gentle light of happiness in her eye. Even Mary observed it, and averred, in a tone that defied contradiction, that she had "the very loveliest sister in the whole world." And then silence fell upon the group.

Mary, the chatter-box, was the first to break it. "Mamma," said she, "I wish I knew—do people ever send real love-letters—offers—real, serious ones, I mean, on Valentine's day?"

"I knew of one who did," replied the mother, with a strange smile upon her face.

"Who was it, mamma?" cried Mary, eagerly, while Charlotte started, but was reassured by a glance at her mother's face. "Oh, I see—it was papa—wasn't it? Tell us all about it, won't you, mamma, oh do!" and in a moment she was seated at her mother's feet, on the low stool she liked so well.

The mother looked down into the listening face, and smiled again, glanced anxiously at Charlotte, and began:

"I was just thinking of it, dears, that twenty years ago this day, I received my first and only Valentine, a real one—a plain, manly, sensible letter that changed the whole tenor of my life. I was not happy as a girl, as you have heard, my children. I had no pleasant home, no loving brothers and sisters, no kind parents. My father I do not remember, he died when I was still so young, and then my mother struggled on amidst poverty, and loneliness, and ill-health, till I was a little more than fourteen—not much older than Mary—when she, too, died, and I was left a destitute orphan with no hope or dependence except in the reluctant charities of the relations who had spurned my mother when she stooped, as they thought, to become my father's wife.

"To one of these, her only sister, my mother had written when she knew her death was near, beseeching her to extend to her orphan child the kindness she had denied herself—and had received a cold promise that I should not want. My aunt, Mrs. Seymour, arrived just after my mother's death, and remained until the funeral services were over. The next morning she carried me away with her to her home in a distant city. And there, for the next six years, I dragged out a weary, miserable existence, treated like a menial, denied a word of kindness, debarred from education or intercourse with my cousins, who were taught to look upon me with contempt. The only member of the household who ever addressed me kindly, was Horace Lansing. He was the son of my Uncle Seymour's first wife, and Uncle Seymour was his guardian. Thus, though Aunt Seymour detested him only less than me, he continued to reside in the family and was always treated with outward kindness, because he was heir of a large property, from which his guardian received a considerable amount yearly in payment of his expenses.

"Horace was nineteen when I first arrived at Uncle Seymour's, and was a student of Yale College, and, at that time, spending the long vacation at home. The next summer he graduated, and for a year or two more was established at home, being absent occasionally on journeys, but usually devoting himself to his legal studies. An occasional kind word from him while a member of the household, or a trifling gift, made all the sunshine of my dreary life.

"About three years after I arrived at Uncle Seymour's, Horace went away. He was completing his studies in New York, and afterwards entered into partnership with the firm of which he is now the principal member. You know, of course, girls, that I am speaking of your father. After that I only saw him at long intervals, when he made brief visits to his early home, and as I was no longer a child even in appearance, he ceased to notice me in his old half-teasing, half-affectionate manner, and always treated me with distant respect. But I was kept so busily employed, as a sort of maid for my cousins, two of whom are now in society, that I saw but very little of him during these visits. Only during one of these sojourns he was laid up for a week or two from a sprain, or something of that kind, and then, at evening, when Aunt Seymour and the girls were away, the younger children in bed, and my uncle dozing in the library, I used to go down to the little sitting-room where Horace lay upon the sofa, and read to him, or listen to his conversation, and pass a happy hour or two that went far to compensate me for the miseries of my lot.

"After this Horace wrote to me more and more frequently, and much of my small leisure was devoted to answering these letters, which, I can see now, were unconsciously educating both my mind and my heart. I was no longer wretched, though I do not know that I either hoped for, or expected any change in my lot. I was unconscious of any feeling but that of gratitude to Horace Lansing, until one morning I overheard a conversation between Aunt Seymour and the girls that rudely enlightened me.

"'Marry Cordelia, of course he will, he must!' my aunt was saying. 'Horace Lansing is an honorable man, and the attentions he has shown her can have but one meaning. I have no doubt he will propose the next time he comes.'

"'Well, I wish he would,' said Sarah, the second daughter, 'for I am tired of being kept in the background; as you insist I shall be till Cordelia is married. But Horace calls us his sisters, and treats us as such. I don't believe he ever thought of Cordelia as anything else. I should far sooner think he would propose to Alice, for he writes to her every week, and it is evident he cares more for her than any member of our family.'

"'Alice, indeed!' exclaimed my aunt and Cordelia together, in tones of indignation. 'I should as soon think of his proposing to the cook,' cried my aunt; 'and be cautious, Sarah, not to put any thoughts of that kind into the child's head. She's troublesome enough now, goodness knows, and she would be positively unbearable if she thought Horace Lansing intended proposing to her.'

"No such thought had ever had entrance to my mind; but now, on hearing the mother so confidently predict that he would become the husband of Cordelia, I first learned how dear he had become to me, and that the feelings I had cherished for him were not those of gratitude alone. I would not acknowledge that I had any hope; but, as the days and weeks wore on from that time, bringing me no more of those ever-welcome letters, I learned by the bitter disappointment I felt that I had cherished some. Of course I ceased to write. The sole pleasure of my life was gone, and I went on from day to day performing my duties mechanically and listlessly. And so the winter wore on. It was November, I think, when I overheard this conversation, and February had arrived without my having heard from Horace.

"It was on the 13th that he came home. I heard his voice, but did not meet him until late in the afternoon, his door opened as I was passing. I would have drawn back, but he stood before me so suddenly there was no time. He caught my hand and drew me toward the window that lighted the passage.

"'What does this mean, little one?' he said. "Why are you looking so wan and spectral, and why have you not written to me in all these months?'

"Oh! Horace," I cried, striving to release my hands; but he held me fast, while his eyes demanded an answer. "I have not written because I have not had a letter from you since November."

"'Since November, are you sure?' Then, seeing that it was true, he dropped my hands, touched my head lightly with one of his, and said, almost gaily, 'I comprehend, but don't mind. I'll see that you've no more cause for complaint about letters. You shall have the very first one I write.'

"His gay tone chilled me, for it struck a chord that only thrilled with pain. But his promise made me happy. I did not see him again that day, nor the next. The next day the girls were laughing and wondering over their Valentines, and Sarah, affecting to pity me, asked me if I did not wish I could receive just one. Just then the bell rung, and Cordelia, who had been looking from the window, cried out that it was the postman, and that I must go to the door, for James had gone out on an errand for her. I went, and of the half-dozen letters received, that which lay upon the top was addressed to me in Horace Lansing's well-known hand. I slipped it into my pocket, and returned up stairs with such a radiant face that Cordelia averred, with a sneer, that I must have received a valentine, myself. I got out of the room without answering, and fled away to my attic. It was not until I had the letter in my hand that the thought occurred to me that it might have been written by the betrothed husband of Cordelia Seymour. I sat some time trembling, afraid to open it, but finally gathered courage to read its contents—the plain, direct words in which I was asked to become the wife of Horace Lansing—words that veiled the strength and tenderness of a love that has been, for all these years, the joy and blessing of my life.

"But I am making my story very long. Let me hasten. That evening I met Horace in the well-encumbered little sitting-room, and there Aunt Seymour found us when she returned home from the party, where she had expected to show off Horace as the betrothed of her daughter. She was beside herself with rage when she learned all; but Horace silenced her by informing her that he had discovered that she had prevented his letters from reaching me, and a calm followed the stormy scene. She insisted, however, that I should leave her house on the morrow.

"And on the morrow Horace brought his aunt, the sister of his mother, who had consented to afford me an asylum until our marriage should take place. With her I passed a few happy, busy weeks, and then Horace came and brought me home, to his dear home, where every day of my life since has been crowned with joys and blessings. My dears, did you hear the bell? I think your father has come home."

Bridget's heavy tramp was heard in the hall, the door opened, and cheerful voices sounded—Mr. Lansing's and another's. Charlotte clung to her mother trembling, and Mary was only restrained from rushing out to meet her father by the dread of encountering a stranger. The library door opened and closed with a clang, and presently Bridget put her head into the room.

"If ye plaze, Miss Charlotte, your papa is wishing to see ye in the library, and there's a strange gintleman there."

"Oh, mamma, must I go?"

"Go, my child, your father is there, and he loves you too well to ask you to do anything against your own wishes. He will stop with you, if you desire."

Apparently she did not desire, for, when Mr. Lansing met her at the library door, and kissed her cheek, and led her into the room, and placed her hand in that of the young man who had risen so eagerly to receive her, she made no opposition to his going away. And surely we have no right to intrude upon these lovers.

Meanwhile Bridget, beginning to light the gas and close the curtains, was saying to Mrs. Lansing:

"If ye plaze, ma'am, I'm thinking, an no offence to ye, that Miss Charlotte's valentine is down stairs. A mighty purty man he is, ma'am, and maybe 'll be her husband some day. An' sure, ma'am, this is the blissid day entirely, for what did Patrick Murphy, the big polishman, do, the morn, but sind me a valentine. An' its all writ over, an' Miss Mary was a-readin' it to me, how he axed me to go to church wid him next Sunday, an', ma'am, do ye think will I?"

Before Mrs. Lansing could answer this speech, Mr. Lansing's step was heard upon the stairs. Suddenly Bridget unfurled the apron she had been busily rolling up, and threw it over her blazing face as she rushed out, narrowly escaping her master, as she made her way down the stairs.

Mr. Lansing approached his wife, and, stooping over her chair, kissed her fair brow. She put her hand in his, and drew him down by her side. Mary had stolen out to question Bridget, and they were alone.

"Oh, Horace!" said Mrs. Lansing, "do you remember twenty years ago this day—when you were my valentine, and I first knew you loved me? And now we are giving our darling to another."

"Yes, dear, we give her to George Stanley, a true, worthy youth. If they love each other, as we did, they can only be happy thus, and we would only seek our child's happiness. Are you content, dear wife?" A glance at the calm, radiant face assured him that then, as ever, her thoughts were as his thoughts. He drew her closer in his embrace, and as the dear head rested upon his shoulder, murmured, "Good wife, good mother, best friend!"

There was a moment's silence, full of happy thoughts, and then very softly the husband, whose love had known no waning in that score of happy years, repeated the lines of Tennyson:

> "Look through mine eyes with thine, true wife,
> Round my true heart thine arms entwine;
> My other, dearer life in life,
> Look through my very soul with thine!"
>
> "My wife, my life! O we will walk this world,
> Yoked in all exercise of noble aim,
> And so through those dark gates across the wild
> That no man knows."

A TAME BUTTERFLY.

One cold, bleak November morning, when the sky and all nature wore the sullen, desponding look so peculiar to our climate at this season, a lady, who, for the first time, had risen from a bed of sickness, went into an adjoining apartment, where she perceived a gay and beautiful butterfly in the window. Astonished at finding this creature of flowers and sunshine in so uncongenial a situation, she watched his movements and operations. As the sun came out for a bright, brief space, it fluttered joyously about the window, and imparted to the sick room an air of cheerfulness and hope. Towards evening, however, the tiny creature drooped its wings; the lady then placed it in a glass tumbler on the mantel-piece. During the night a hard frost came on, and the room was in consequence very cold. In the morning the butterfly lay in the bottom of the tumbler, apparently dead. The invalid, grieved that her gentle companion of the previous day should so soon perish, made some effort to restore its fragile existence. She put it on her own warm hand, and breathing upon it, perceived it gave signs of returning animation; she then once more placed it in the glass house on the rug before the fire. Soon the elegant little insect spread out its many-colored wings, and flew to the window, where the sun was shining brightly. By-and-by the sun retired, and the window-panes getting cold, the creature sank down on the carpet again, apparently lifeless. The same means were used to restore animation, and with the same success. This alternation of life and death went on for many days, till at last the grateful little thing became quite tame, and seemed to be acquainted with its benefactress. When she went to the window, and held out her finger, it would, of its accord, hop upon it; sometimes it would settle for an hour at a time upon her hand or neck when she was reading or writing. Its food consisted of honey; a drop of which the lady would put upon her hand, when the butterfly would uncurl its sucker, and gradually sip it up; then it usually sipped a drop of water in the same way. The feeding only took place once in three or four days. In this manner its existence was prolonged through the whole winter and part of the following spring. As it approached the end of its career, its wings became quite transparent, and its spirits apparently dejected. It would rest quietly in its "crystal palace" even when the sun was wooing it to come out, and, at last, one morning in April, it was found dead—quite dead.

"NO. 1549—$750."

We were riding in a Third avenue car a few days since, when a lady got in. Though young, there was nothing very prepossessing about her appearance, nor would our attention have been attracted to our *vis-a-vis*, but for the fact that she wore a shawl, on the front edge of which was sewn a broad linen label, some six inches long, on which was printed in inch figures the importer's mark, "No. 1549—$750." There could be no plea for the fair wearer on the score of having forgotten to remove it, as was the case with the lady of an American minister to London, some years since, who walked out of a store with the ticket appended to the article she wore, "this style fifty guineas"—for the shawl was carefully folded so that every one should be able to read the label, which ever and anon she complacently regarded. We expect next to see the price of every article of a fashionable lady's toilet affixed, so that every swain may know the cost of "getting up" the fair creature—as "this cloak $150," "this Paris hat $30," "this moire antique $300," culminating, we hope, with a label for the lady herself, "This living doll, a great bargain, at twenty thousand dollars." We pity the victim of that seven-hundred-and-fifty-dollar shawl, for he is undoubtedly mated with a weak, vain and foolish woman.—*Wilkes' Spirit of the Times.*

◆

—With a true wife a husband's faults should be sacred. A woman forgets what is due to herself when she condescends to that refuge of weakness—a female *confidante*. A wife's bosom should be the tomb of her husband's failings, and his character far more valuable in her estimation than his life. If this be not the case, she pollutes her marriage vow.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

IT is not to be supposed that the Devil would give half as much for the services of a sinner as he would for those of one of the folks that are always doing virtuous acts in a way to make them unpleasing.

THE earth is a great factory-wheel, which, at every revolution on its axis, receives fifty thousand raw souls and turns off nearly the same number worked up more or less completely.

WE have all seen the tragedy of imprudent genius, struggling for years with paltry pecuniary difficulties, at last sinking, chilled, exhausted, and fruitless, like a giant slaughtered by pins.

WE weep, to acquire the reputation of tenderness; we weep, in order to be pitied; we weep that we may be wept over; we even weep to avoid the scandal of not weeping.

VIRTUE finds its securest home among the sons of poverty and toil, as a green and blooming spot is safest from violation when shut in by the unsightly and rugged rocks.

AMIDST society the Christian avows his faith; in solitude he feels it. Upon the plains and in the valleys he believes; in the mountains he sees.

A TYRANT cannot well bind one end of a chain around the arms or legs of a people without finding the other around his own neck.

EVEN a reprobate's son is likely to pay due regard to the will of his parents if it makes him the heir of their property.

THE earth is an example of forgiveness, for to him who wounds and lacerates her gentle bosom she yields her greatest treasures.

SOME philanthropists are so bitterly fanatical against hanging that they would gibbit all who are in favor of it.

WE have seen a couple of sisters who had to be told everything together, for they were so much alike they couldn't be told apart.

THE religious persecutor abominates the smell of a raw heretic, but greatly enjoys the odor of a roasted one.

THERE is frozen music in many a heart that the beams of encouragement would melt into glorious song.

HE who asked the daughter's hand and got the father's foot, had the consolation of knowing that his wooing was not bootless.

IT is very unskillful flattery to tell a man that he isn't half so big a fool as the world thinks him.

WHEN we say of some men that they are self-made, we do so out of respect to our Maker.

AT some taverns you have to pay cash for your victuals, but are furnished with vermin on *tick*.

EVERY hungry fellow is willing to be a martyr when he has a chance at the steak.

THE great truths that are brought to light are new and old at their birth.

IT has been discovered that asthmatic persons die for the want of breath.

THE head of a pure old man, like a mountain-top, whitens as it gets nearer to heaven.

THE coquette pursues her lover, and makes him think he is pursuing her.

THE highest degree of cunning is a pretended blindness to snares which we know are laid for us.

THE objects we most passionately desire are generally those that we know least about.

VERY old nothings are apt to please very old fools.

MANY a fast young man has knocked a cordwainer out of his boots.

A WIDOW, whose lands supply rich grazing for a thousand cattle, is an attractive grass widow.

NO two words more distinctly express cause and consequences than—gin and bitters.

SAILORS are never so lively as when they are in the shrouds.

THE things, that are really for us, naturally gravitate to us.

CURRENT ITEMS

A LITTLE girl, about five years of age, whose parents live in Avenue B, was burnt to death, in a shocking manner, one day recently. The child was left alone in a room in which there was an open grate with a fire in it, and it is supposed that while playing around, she stumbled and fell upon the grate, whereby her clothes were set on fire. She screamed and ran into the street, with the flames streaming above her head, but soon fell to the pavement, surrounded by a horrified crowd, some of whom at once took steps to extinguish the fire; but the poor child had been burnt so badly that she died before she could be carried back into the house.

HONORAH LAWLER, a servant-girl living in South Brooklyn, was burned to death, the other evening, by her clothes taking fire at the range in the kitchen, at which she was at work. She became so frightened when she discovered that her clothes were on fire, that she ran screaming up to her room, which was in the third story, and then ran screaming down again, by which time her clothes were one mass of flame and rescue had become impossible.

SEVERAL young men from Connecticut, who had come to town to "see the sights and stir up the animals," as one of them expressed it, were inveigled into a place in Broadway where there are sights to be seen and animals to be stirred up which are not met with in reputable places, and made to pay so roundly for the entertainment that they complained to the police and got some of their money back.

A SKITTISH horse, attached to a buggy, in which a lady was seated, ran away in Broadway, one morning not long since, and dashing hither and thither among the vehicles, at last slipped and fell upon the pavement, upsetting the buggy, and hurling the lady against the wheel of an omnibus, whereby she was hurt so seriously, that it was thought doubtful if she would ever recover from her injuries.

A MAN fell from the fourth-story window of a house, in Twenty-first street, one day recently, and was injured so badly, that he died in the course of a few hours. Although he struck on his head, there was no sign of external injury, which was accounted for by the fact that he struck on a soft spot of earth; but it was found on a post-mortem examination that the brain had been fatally injured.

A LITTLE boy, about two years old, whose parents live in Williamsburgh, was playing with a tumbler, one evening not long since, which he dropped and broke, and then began to stamp upon it with his bare feet, whereby he stuck a piece of the broken glass into his heel, and inflicted such a wound that he was soon after taken with lockjaw, and died in the course of the night.

A WIDOW woman, living in Williamsburg, was burnt so badly one evening lately, from the bursting of a fluid lamp which she was trying to fill while it was lighted, that she was not expected to live. A portion of the blazing fluid was thrown into her eyes, which were so much injured that she would probably be forever blind should she otherwise recover from the effects of the accident.

A COUPLE of men got into a quarrel on top of an omnibus in Broadway, one day recently, and proceeding from words to blows they got tangled up and rolled off the omnibus, and coming down promiscuously on the pavement, they were both hurt so badly as to be unable to continue the fight. One had to be carried home, and the other had much difficulty in making his way alone.

A NUMBER of unruly boys insulted a couple of ladies in Fourteenth street, one day lately, and a gentleman, who attempted to discipline them for it, was attacked by them with clubs and stones, and seriously injured, and would probably have been hurt still worse, had not the young wretches seen a policeman coming, by whose appearance they were frightened off.

A WOMAN, carrying a large box, was knocked down and run over in Broadway by an omnibus, one day lately, and the wheels passing over one of her arms crushed it and ground it so that it only held by the skin. The woman was taken up insensible and carried to the hospital.

THREE or four ruffians attacked a gentleman as he was passing along the New Bowery, one evening lately, and beat him so badly that he had to be carried to the hospital; but he gave two of the ruffians severe wounds with a sword-cane which he carried, before they disabled him.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

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ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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THE ROMAN EMPERORS.—No. 5.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

CALIGULA AND CLAUDIUS.

Our Saviour was crucified the eighteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar. Pontius Pilate was at this time the Roman governor of Judea. It is related by Justin, Tertullian and others, that Pilate wrote to the Emperor Tiberius an account of the crucifixion of our Saviour, his resurrection and his miracles; and that Tiberius was so impressed by the narration, that he recommended that Christ should have a niche among the Roman Gods. After the assassination of the dying Tiberius, Caligula, grasping the sceptre of the world's empire, assumed the most arrogant airs, demanding of his subjects divine honors. His conduct became so extravagant, that it is difficult to account for it under any other explanation than that of insanity. He erected a temple, and placed in it an image of himself which the people were required to worship. The most costly sacrifices were daily offered at that ridiculous shrine. With the most imposing sacerdotal rites, he ordained his wife and his favorite horse to officiate in this idolatrous worship. His baths were composed of the most costly liquids; while jewels were dissolved in his sauces, simply to render them more regally expensive. His priestly horse occupied a marble stable with an ivory manger; gilt oats were furnished him, and he drank from a golden goblet.

This idiotic folly was even surpassed by the cruelty of the tyrant. Senators were wantonly slain unaccused of crime. Death by torture was the doom of any one who incurred his suspicion. He fed his wild beasts with the bodies of his victims, throwing them into the dens of half-famished lions and tigers to be devoured alive. The love of cruelty became his crowning passion. Nothing gave him so much pleasure as to witness the sufferings of others. He not unfrequently expressed the wish that the whole Roman people had but one neck, that he might sever it with one blow of his sabre. Indeed if one-half that is recorded of Caligula, by apparently authentic history, is true, there never was an inmate of a mad-house more ignominiously crazy.

For such a monster there were many cups poisoned and many daggers sharpened in Rome. The slightest suspicion doomed any one to death, and no one could be long in his household without incurring suspicion. An extensive conspiracy was formed in the court, to take the life of one whose continued existence endangered the lives of all around him. There was a very beautiful woman in the palace by the name of Quintilia. The king, ever suspecting some plot, seized her and put her to the most awful tortures of the rack to extort a confession. Heroically she endured the utmost anguish with which human nerves can thrill. This terrific scene, witnessed in the palace, inspired all with the energies of despair. No one knew who was next to be placed upon that dreadful wheel. A Roman Senator, Cherea, watched his chance, and plunged a dagger to the hilt in the heart of Caligula, exclaiming, "Tyrant, think of this." The blow was well aimed, and Caligula fell dead. He was then but twenty-nine years old, having reigned only four years.

This assassination was the spasmodic movement of agony and despair. There had been but little concert and no arrangements had been made for a successor. A strange scene of confusion, anarchy and terror ensued. The conspirators, not knowing what destruction, like an avalanche, might fall upon them, fled in all directions. The palace was instantly deserted, for the worthless myrmidons of Caligula, fearing that they might encounter the same doom which had befallen their master, also took to flight. A band of soldiers, straggling through the deserted halls of the palace, found hid in a closet and trembling like an aspen leaf, an uncle of Caligula, named Claudius. He was an imbecile old man, fifty-five years of age, and had ever been half idiotic from a disease which affected his brain in early infancy. His mental imbecility had not however weakened the power of his passions, or shielded him from the most intense depravity.

The riotous soldiers, in a sort of drunken brawl, took the old man and declared that he should be their king. The poor wretch had a wife Messalina. She has attained the unenviable pre-eminence of having been the worst woman, perhaps, who ever lived. The record of her infamy has survived the lapse of eighteen centuries. The brutal husband hated thoroughly, as well he might, his worse than brutal wife, and, with the assistance of an accomplice, openly murdered her. Claudius soon after recognized another wretched woman of the court, Agrippina, as his wife. She was already the mother of a boy by the name of Nero,—that Nero whose crimes have blackened the page of history. She was the fourth wife of Claudius, he having already killed one and divorced two.

The possession of unlimited power soon developed in Claudius the malignity and the energy of a fiend. Great Britain was then an almost unknown island, inhabited by savage tribes, who were ferociously warring against each other. It had been occasionally visited by the Roman soldiers. Claudius despatched an army to conquer the island. The Roman legions traversed Gaul, and crossing the channel, after many sanguinary battles, brought the natives under the sway of the eagles of the empire. Claudius, greatly elated by the conquest, repaired in person to Britain that he might receive the homage of his new subjects. This was A. D. 46. He made a short visit of but sixteen days, and returned to Rome to enjoy a magnificent triumph which he had ordered. There were still many battles to be fought before the hardy islanders were thoroughly subdued. After thirty battles, Britain, in the year 51, became a permanent province of the Roman Empire. Still there were not a few tribes, in their remote fastnesses, who for years bade defiance to the invaders, keeping the armies of Rome incessantly employed. Many fierce battles were fought, and not unfrequently the Roman soldiers bit the dust, beaten down by the clubs of the sturdy islanders. The armies of Rome were, however, too strong to be long held in check by any amount of barbarian valor. Caractacus, King of South Wales, was one of the most valiant and successful of the barbarian chieftains. He was at length taken captive, after a bloody resistance, and, with his wife and daughter, was sent to Rome. When he beheld the wealth, splendor and power of the imperial capital, so far surpassing any thing his imagination had conceived before, he exclaimed:

"How is it possible that people, in the enjoyment of such magnificence, should envy Caractatus a humble cottage in Britain."

Agrippina was as bad as her feeble capacity allowed her to be. Husband and wife soon hated each other venomously. One day, Claudius, when intoxicated, said that it was his fate to be tormented with bad wives, and to be their executioner. The hint was sufficient for Agrippina. There was but one alternative before her. She must either kill or be killed. The Emperor was very fond of mushrooms. Agrippina suddenly became wonderfully docile and affectionate. With her own loving hands she prepared a dish of mushrooms for her dear spouse. She sprinkled some poison upon the delicious viands. With smiles and caresses she presented the repast to Claudius. He ate, was thrown into convulsions, fell upon the floor and died. Agrippina was delighted, and so was all Rome. She had a son, as we have mentioned—Nero. He was then seventeen years of age. Bad as his mother was, Nero, at this time, was not particularly vicious. He was well educated, and had generally displayed rather an amiable disposition. The mother determined to place this boy, who had no recognized father, upon the throne.

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THE PENNIES—WHERE ARE THEY?

The *intrinsic* value of a nickel cent is about the two hundred and twentieth part of a dollar. In other words, a "nickel," although it represents the one hundredth part of a dollar, is only worth, as metal, about four mills. The copper cent, valued in the same way, is worth about eight mills. Neither coin can be profitably exported, and yet both are now at a considerable premium, and the public is much inconvenienced by their scarcity. Of course this penny famine is the result of rascally speculation. There is the big gold bubble, which acquires from its magnitude a conventional respectability, and the little nickel and copper bubble, which everybody despises. The "large operators," who keep the former afloat, one can see any day on 'Change, but in what obscure kennel the penny factors meet to compare notes we know not. If their *whereabouts could be discovered it were a good deed to set the street-beggars and crossing-sweepers on them, for these classes suffer severely from their dirty proceedings, and would go at them with a will.* There is one consolation, however, the "copper" hoarders will be nicely "nipped" in the end. The mint at Philadelphia has been for some time past turning out "nickels" at the rate of between two and three thousand dollars worth per day, and they will soon be a drug in the market. Let nobody pay the premium demanded by the small Shylocks. The inconvenience cannot be of long duration. Bear it patiently for the sake of turning the tables on the exactors, and proving, not to their satisfaction, but to their chagrin and detriment, that penny wisdom may be pound foolishness.

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THE VALUE OF A BRIGADIER.

The following paragraph, which has been going the round of the papers, refers to the youngest general in the service: he is stated to be only twenty-one years old:

> "President Lincoln, when informed that Gen. Stoughton had been captured by the rebels at Fairfax, is reported to have said that he did not mind the loss of the Brigadier as much as he did the loss of the horses. 'For, said he, 'I can make a much better Brigadier in five minutes, but the horses cost a hundred and twenty-five dollars apiece.'"

There is, or used to be, a rather celebrated tonic known as "Stoughton's Bitters," a reminiscence of the flavor of which forced itself upon us as we read the above. Nevertheless, as an offset to the bitters, there is balm in Gilead for us, and here it is. Let some of our smart fellows make a raid in the proper direction and capture Humphrey Marshall, who is the Stout 'un of the rebels. This will more than balance the loss of our Stoughton, seeing that the rebel Stout 'un is about twice his age and four times his weight.

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PUT THAT AND THAT TOGETHER.

We are informed by the *Daily Times*, of the 10th inst., in one and the same paragraph, that "The Inspector seized last week, as unhealthy, 650 pounds of beef," and that "The mortality in horses in this city last week reached sixty-seven."

There is a very suspicious association in these statements between the ox and the horse; and yet it is not well for us to be over particular in our inquiries as to the real origin of our food and drink. "Where ignorance is bliss," as the poet sings, "'tis folly to be wise." The philosopher who found a piece of a tortoise-shell comb in his ox-tail soup, consoled himself by assuming that they had brought him turtle-soup by mistake; and so, should any of our readers happen to detect horse-shoe nails in their beef-steak pie or pudding, let them draw comfort from the remembrance that a distinguished Frenchman has written much to prove horse-flesh a far more palatable and nutritious article of diet than beef.

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"Winter Lingering in the Lap of Spring."—In this piping Spring time—beloved of bardlings—it behooves us to look well to our necks and soles—muffling closely the former and leather-plating the latter with two-fold ox-hide. Moreover let no vernal enthusiast, misled by lying pastorals, think of divesting himself of overcoat or flannel shirt, under the insane impression that "Ethereal mildness" begins in March. Dearly shall such individual pay for putting his faith in poetry and the imaginary line with which the almanac makers have divided the Winter from the Spring. Heaven, it is true, "tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," but then the shorn lamb is not self-denuded of his fleecy hosiery. No sheep would be fool enough to doff his woolens before June. It takes the human animal to be guilty of such an act of idiocy.

MONOPOLIZING LUXURIES.

Nothing is more easy than to pluck the Public Goose. In fact, it sheds its feathers voluntarily into the hands of speculation. The people have only to be of one mind in order to put down all monopolies of the luxuries of life, and to prevent exorbitant profits from being realized at their expense upon most of its staples; but they make no effort to defend themselves against exaction. Suppose the ladies were to put down their little feet firmly and say, "we will buy no more of Alexandre's, or Jouvin's gloves at $1.75 and $2.00 a pair; but will forego the pleasure of wearing the dainty fabrics until they are offered at a reasonable figure." Of course those delicate manufacture of kid or rat-skin (which is it?) would at once become a drug in the market, and the monopolists would be glad to sell them at a premium of 10 instead of 75 per cent. on cost. Enormous gains are now reaped from the sale of fashionable articles, for which others equally useful might be substituted at a saving to consumers of from 20 to 50 per cent.; and many commodities which the world would be better without bring almost fabulous prices, simply because people have not *pluck* enough to sacrifice their artificial appetites and pernicious habits to their true interests. We prate against the greed of speculators, while we foster and encourage it by putting our necks under their feet. There are some things, it is true, which the community *must have*, and if the supply of any one of them should be concentrated in a few unscrupulous hands, the million would have no remedy except the "higher law" of the strong hand. But it is difficult as well as dangerous to monopolize articles of the *first necessity*, and hence absolutely indispensable staples are rarely forestalled for any considerable length of time. A resolute combination of the public against extortion must always in the end triumph over any combination of speculators. We have only to declare with our voice that we will not buy at the prices arbitrarily fixed by the extortionists, and to act up to that declaration, to compel them back to justice. They cannot ruin us except by our own consent; but we can ruin them if they do not choose to deal fairly with us. When they attempt to pick our pockets, let us not whine and grumble, but unite and resist, even if we sacrifice some of our luxuries, our pet habits, nay our comforts, in so doing. The game is in our own hands.

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THE BLIND.

People who see, hear and speak, differ in opinion as to whether to be blind or deaf and dumb is the heavier misfortune. Deaf mutes have, however, this advantage over the blind: their condition can be ameliorated to a much greater extent. They can be taught to convey with their fingers the sense of all articulate sounds, and their eyes, so far as verbal communication is concerned, serve the purposes of ears. Whoever has seen the Rev. Mr. Gallaudet *gesticulate a sermon* to his deaf and dumb flock, in Eighteenth street, will admit that art has created for this class of unfortunates a silent language as copious and as easily comprehended as the spoken tongue which it represents. But how shall we convey to the understanding of the man born blind a true idea of the beauty and grandeur of the visible universe. The thing is impossible. With the senses left to him he may sometimes make an effort to supply the place of the one he lacks, but the results are generally so wide of the mark *that we should laugh at their absurdity if pity did not prevent our mirth with tears.* He may *indeed read by the touch*, but the language which describes the wonders and the beauties of nature has for him no true significance. He knows not the difference between light and shadow. Ask him of the varieties of color, and he will liken them, perhaps, to the varieties of sound. The "wisdom at one entrance quite shut out" cannot enter by any other. Had Milton been *born* sightless, he had never written Paradise Lost.

But after all, the blind people most to be pitied are those who walk the earth with open eyes, yet see nothing which does not concern their own material interests. To them the sun is simply a convenience, the sea valuable for its fish and for travelling and forwarding purposes, a continent an immense piece of real estate worth so much per acre, according to the location, climate, water privileges, improvements, &c., of its various tracts, and the whole terraqueous globe a big mart in which the sole object of the smart inhabitants should be to accumulate wealth at the expense of the dull ones. Individuals of this class fancy themselves wide awake, while in fact they are fast asleep—mere somnambulists. There is no blindness so dense as that of the sordid, cold, unimaginative materialist to whom the glorious works of God suggest no higher aspiration than a desire to speculate on them.

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EXTRAORDINARY FROM PARIS.

The Paris letter of one of our daily journals lately contained the following remarkable paragraph:

> "The only new features of the season worth noting is, that satins are again coming into fashion, and that the head-dress continues to mount toward the colossal dimensions of the first Empire; so that there is now a chance for a small woman to be seen."

When we reflect upon the "colossal dimensions" of the empire founded by the First Napoleon, our merely human mind shrinks from the contemplation of a head-dress approaching that very considerable portion of all creation in size. But what *can* the writer mean by saying that "there is now a chance for a small woman to be seen" with a stupendous turban of the kind referred to upon her head? Imagine a woman of even ordinary size, to say nothing of "a small woman," with a turban of the "colossal dimensions" of half Europe and a good part of Asia and America upon her head. It does not seem to us that she would have a "chance to be seen," under the circumstances.

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—It is curious to observe the speculations and predictions of European statesmen, editors, letter-writers, &c., concerning the Polish insurrection. As we write, it is stated that the uprising of the Poles has already become alarmingly formidable, that it is to be followed by a general uprising of the democracies of Europe, and that a general European war is imminent, in the fire and wrecks of which thrones will be consumed and dynasties overthrown; but before this paragraph sees the light of publication the whole face of matters may be changed, the insurrection be quelled, and peace again brood over the subsiding waters of political agitation. In the meantime, we can only read the foreign news with reasonable doubts, and patiently await the developments of time and Providence.

◆

—Louis Napoleon seems to be poking his nose into every nation's business. He assaults the Mexicans, "counsels" the United States, warns Russia, bullies Rome, cheats Italy, wheedles England, threatens Prussia, snubs Austria, cajoles Spain and swindles France. And yet it is said that he trembles at the slightest shake of Eugenie's taper finger, and that should he poke his nose into any of her affairs she would not hesitate to pull it smartly. Thus it is that one woman can strike more terror to the soul of an emperor than all the nations of the earth combined.

WORSE THAN PUNIC PERFIDY.

The Carthagenians, during the era of the Punic wars, repeatedly violated their solemn engagements with Rome, and hence the term "Punic Faith" became a synonym for hypocrisy and treachery, and so remains to this day. Let the phrase now be expunged from our vocabulary, and "British Faith" be written there in its stead. Carthage was the hereditary foe of Rome. It had suffered great wrongs from that overbearing republic. Consequently no parallel can be drawn between the faithlessness of Carthage to its treaties with its haughty rival, and the faithlessness of Great Britain to the professions of friendship which she has made and is still making to the government of the United States. In the wars between this country and England the injustice was all on the British side; but we forgave—almost forgot it. We remembered that we were of the same blood and race as our sometime enemy, and the Younger Nation grasped the hand of the Elder with an honest, earnest grip in token of amity, fellowship and good-will. What the Junior did for the Senior, in the day of Famine and Distress, is a bright page in our history. What the Senior is now doing to aggravate the misfortunes of the Junior shall stamp her annals with shame through all coming time. Great Britain is, practically, making war upon us in the interests of Rebellion. Not open war—that were manly—but *assassin, back-stabbing war*. Read their professions of neutrality, and then read the authentic lists of the ships of war fitting out in British ports to destroy our commerce and assail our coasts. We ask the judgment of the world upon this astounding discrepancy between acts and professions.

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NEWSPAPER INFLUENCE.

We know people who sneer at newspaper influence—who say that it amounts to nothing—who, in fact, assert that persons in whose favor newspapers speak are injured by what *is* termed "puffery," but *should* be called advertising. The late census, just published, goes to show that there are issued in this country about 800,000,000 copies of newspapers every year. This is a calculation great enough to appal the heaviest paper manufacturer, frighten the most extensive maker of printers' ink, and carry dismay to the heart of the liveliest and most energetic pressman. Yet it is, upon calm reflection, nothing to be astonished at. Newspapers are a part of our system of government. Without them we should do very little—*nothing at all worth remembering* in fact. The newspaper is, therefore, to our social existence what rain and sunshine are to the grass, the vivifying principle apart from which the whole republican fabric would crumble and decay. With 800,000,000 copies of newspapers to choose from every year, it is somewhat strange that many a man allows his business to languish for the want of making it known. But prejudice is of greater effect, oftentimes, than reason. To our friends who desire to increase their business, we would say, *advertise—advertise extensively*. We do not say so for the sake of inducing people to advertise in the Ledger, because, as our readers are aware, we do not publish any advertisements in our columns. We have been offered *fifty dollars a line*, from a merchant who was anxious to get us to publish his advertisement, but we declined the proposition, as we prefer to devote all our space to reading matter.

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ON PAPER.

Among the economies to which the present high price of paper has given rise, a very obvious one is the rarity of that bird of ill omen, the paper kite. March is already more than half gone, and the "quiet skies," which in all our memory used at this windy season to be flecked everywhere with aerial visitors "on a string," are to-day as placid and kiteless as if all the boys in the city had gone into the army as drummers. What a contrast this to our own boyhood's days, when gold was at par, and paper never circulated much except in the form of a kite! Through the street in which we are writing run telegraph wires, and the only kite of the season that we have seen in that street hangs dangling from them by its poor tail at a dizzy height. Crowds of young people flock to gaze upon that kite, daily. Plans have evidently been laid for its resue, but none of them have as yet been successful. There! at this very moment a dashing rag-picker has made a raid upon the wires by affixing his hook to a long pole. How gently he feels along the wire! —surely he must be an electric spark. He has it! No he hasn't! Yes he has! There it is, safely landed, all but the last link of the tail. "The last link is broken," as the song says. And now comes the corner-grocer, and insists upon having half the spoils from the successful rag-picker, for his trouble in looking on. Such is life!

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WEIGH THE MEANING OF YOUR WORDS.

Adjectives are to nouns what pepper, salt, mustard, vinegar, sugar, molasses, butter and other condiments are to the food we eat—very good in moderation and when appropriately applied. But when language is overseasoned with them, or they are inaptly used, the dish of words is spoiled. Some people have a way of cooking up their speeches and writings with preposterous adjectives, with the idea that a profusion of these attributives lends strength to their arguments, while in reality it weakens them. As a people, we are too much given to this sin against taste. Sometimes we kill the flavor of a vigorous substantive with a heap of unsuitable prefixes, as a vulgar cook might destroy the natural savor of a beefsteak with an avalanche of onions. Thus it is not an uncommon thing to hear such phrases as "elegant weather," "awful funny," "powerful pretty," "monstrous polite," "lovely pickles," "beautiful medicine," "ridiculous (meaning outrageous) conduct," "magnificent potatoes," &c., &c. It is a great thing always to drop the right word into the right place. Words are things. Weigh their meaning before you use them.

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BUTTER VS. SOAP.

The word "soap" has long since been adopted into our vernacular as a slang term for money, but, according to the Boston papers, that expression is likely to be superseded. It seems that Mr. A. T. Stewart, the wealthy dry-goods merchant of this city, has bought up all the butter in Boston market, coined it into beautiful yellow medallions, and is going to make payments in the same for goods purchased by him in Europe. Thus the old question, "How are you off for soap?" will probably soon be changed into "How are you off for butter?" We have not yet heard whether Mr. Stewart has adopted any specific designation for his new specie, but we would take the liberty of suggesting that the name of a well-known African coin, the Cow-rie, would be very appropriate for the currency in question.

◆

Garroting as a Fine Art.—It appears that garroting has arrived at the dignity of a fine art in England. The fellows who carry it on have regular rehearsals, at which one personates the unsuspicious elderly gentleman returning from a tea-party, while the others circumvent him and apply the inevitable hug. The actual operator—the choker, in fact—is known in the slang of the profession as the "nasty man."

"MY TRACT."

When that merry and excellent Christian, Thomas Hood, was suffering from a complication of diseases which a few years afterwards destroyed him, he was visited by one of those self-righteous persons who mistakenly assume that all whose feet are not guided by *their* dark lanterns are necessarily following an *ignis fatuus* along the broad way that leads to destruction. This cheerful individual, a lady who, had she been in existence when the Founder of Christianity preached the Gospel of Love, would assuredly have joined the Pharisees in protesting against His Sabbath-day walk in the harvest fields of Palestine, assured Hood that "literature would pall on his soul in his dying hour;" thereby insinuating that "ignorance is bliss" on earth, and "a condition precedent," as the lawyers say, to the enjoyment of Heaven. Hood answered her in a letter entitled "My Tract," which deserves to live as long as the language in which it was written lasts, as a standing reproof to Cant and Intolerance.

Society is still pestered, and the cause of true Religion injured, by sour-faced fanatics, who would impose upon us, for the genial and kindly Christianity of the New Testament, a repulsive scarecrow which is a positive libel upon its precepts and promises. There be some upon whom what *they call* religion appears to have the same effect that excessive potations have upon the drunkard. Their piety is a delirium tremens. They are haunted, it would seem, by hideous phantasms, which they desire to use as a sort of demoniac police to frighten people away from cheerful pursuits and deter them from harmless recreation. Mirth is in their eyes tantamount to sin, and a joke a thing to be repented of in sackcloth and ashes. Forgetful that in the Bible the favorites of Heaven are likened to lambs, the most playful of creatures, they would have us believe that gloom and godliness are one and inseparable. They are the Robespierres of Theology, and would make the reign of Righteousness a reign of Terror.

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THE SONG OF GOLD.

Here I go up, up, up,
And there I go down, down, downy,
And here I go backward and forward
Till many a goose is done browny.

And so, I will keep, keep, keep,
Till the man who is come, come, coming,
Puts this nasty rebellion to sleep,
And shuts down on the drum, drum, drumming.

◆

THE DIFFERENCE.

There are pleasure-loving, selfish natures, which shrink away from the first hint of pain, or disagreeableness, at what cost soever to those who suffer, even though the latter may have the strongest social or natural claims upon their consideration and sympathy. Alas! what would this world of pain and trial and suffering be, were all thus determined to hedge themselves in from those on whom the burden of life falls too heavily; were friends only to be friendly while the eye can sparkle and the voice be musical with laughter; were the suffering to be shunned on any, or all, of the flimsy pretexts with which pleasure-loving selfishness persuades itself that non-interference is the "best." How beautiful in contrast with such sounds the tender sympathetic words of the true-hearted! to whom every tear and pang is only an added reason for kind words and kind offices. Blessed are they who have even *one* such warm friend. For those who have many, life is yet full of blessing, though the sky be dark above them.

Fanny Fern.

◆

SENTENTIOUS DOUBTERS.

Victor Hugo, describing a sceptic, says, "he doubted everything in a superior way, which is a great strength in the eyes of the weak." How many doubters of this class one meets with, and how much mischief they do. They make it their business to discredit received truths, and to sneer at systems based upon them which are evidently adapted to the nature and the necessities of mankind. Christianity, which, viewed merely as a temporal agency, is a synonym for civilization, social harmony, equity, charity, tolerance, progress in all things that tend to moral and intellectual perfection, contents them not. It is not to their taste; its soul-comforting facts are incredible, its theory absurd; they would pull it down. And what have these shallow objectionists to offer in its place? Dogmas, about which no two schools of them agree.

◆

—A young M. D. sends us "An Appeal in Behalf of Our Time-Honored Profession," by which we suppose he means the practice of medicine. He complains that the "public do not sufficiently appreciate the physician's toils and sacrifices," and that "his (the physician's) duties have to be performed without the muffled drum or slow-booming cannon." This strikes us as an exceedingly strange cause of complaint. Why should a physician wish for a "muffled drum," or a "slow-booming cannon?" Does he wish to adopt the Chinese practice of frightening away the demons of disease by the hullabaloo of gongs and the rowdy-dow of tom-toms, or to pepper away at them with grape and canister, solid shot and shell! It seems to us, with all due deference to the professional knowledge of our correspondent, who informs us that he has "just won his diploma," that muffled drums and slow-booming cannon would not be handy things to have in a sick-room. We suspect that this young M. D. has been delivering a commencement valedictory, and that his letter to us is (in his opinion) the cream of the performance, and that he wants it to appear in print, which it will not be allowed to do, at least in the Ledger, until muffled drums and slow-booming cannon shall become customary portions of every doctor's professional apparatus.

◆

—We have received several communications urging us to take ground against the free-and-easy discussion of the personal character of the members of the Administration, and of persons in high places generally, which of late has become so common, and arguing that our chief danger at the present time comes from the demoralizing effects of such damaging discussion of the character of those who must save us, if we are to be saved at all, in this crisis of the nation's fate. This may all be so; but such discussion is, nevertheless, inevitable. The people of this country have fortunately got beyond the influence of official fustian and stupid reverence for what is called "the dignity of the official character." If there *be dignity*, it is respected; but if there be no dignity, then there is nothing to respect. In this wide-awake land, a jackdaw perched in an eagle's nest is a jackdaw still; and no natural born ass can command public respect no matter in what official lion's hide he may wrap himself. Our people too well comprehend that

> "Pigmies are pigmies still though perched on Alps,
> And pyramids are pyramids in vales,"

to be humbugged by the claims of "official dignity," when the dignity is totally lacking.

◆

—Some of the rich people of the country groan every time they have to use a government stamp; but we have never yet heard a poor man utter a complaint against the stamp laws or any other means of raising a national revenue. Nor do the loyal rich people complain; the groans over the taxes seem to come exclusively from those whose heads are venomously infected with copper.

SONNET.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"Return, Oh Lord, how long?—And let it repent Thee, concerning Thy servants."—*Psalm* xc.

Return, oh Lord! to our forsaken Land,
That mourneth o'er her many children dead;
By town and tower they lie, by stream and strand,
Earth o'er their breast, and ashes on their head.

The strong of arm, who made her harvests great,
Young temples bound with Learning's diadem;
Clear minds preparing for the cares of state,
Her brave, her beautiful—she mourns for them,

Beneath the elm-trees by the cottage-door,
From smitten homes, mid kneeling mothers pale,
From dale to mountain top, from surge to shore,
Upriseth grief's interminable wail.

Return, oh Lord! thy wonted love restore,
Forgive our stricken Land, and bid it sin no more.

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THE LIFE-CURSE.

BY ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF "THE OUTLAW'S BRIDE," "THE WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXII.

NAPOLEON AS A MATCH-MAKER.

On a bright day in autumn two ladies sat together in a saloon at Malmaison, and conversed with that freedom which the etiquette of a court had not yet destroyed. The windows looked out on an enchanting park, with a stream of water flashing in the distance.

A bridge which spanned this stream was covered in and arranged like a tent, and in this retreat the conqueror of Europe labored almost without intermission in the service of the nation he ruled.

A small private garden was attached to it, in which Napoleon walked when he felt the need of exercise, and there his great plans for the future were matured.

The ladies to whom we have referred were both young and lovely. Madame Louis Bonaparte was then in the first bloom of youth, and certainly a fresher or fairer looking creature could scarcely have been found. Her figure was supple and delicately rounded; her head, from which flowed a profusion of blonde curls, was gracefully set upon her shoulders, and her arms, hands and feet were models of beauty. She was extremely fair, with soft penetrating blue eyes, in which the soul of kindness dwelt, and a clear rose tint fluctuated on her transparent complexion as feeling or emotion were aroused.

Added to these attractions, she possessed a grace and suavity of manner which rendered her charming to all who approached her, for in Hortense Beauharnais was united the *nonchalance* of the creole with the cultivation and vivacity of the polished Frenchwoman.

Her companion was entirely different in style. She was a lovely brunette, with large soft black eyes, and hair of the same color, with an expression of pensive thought upon her regular features which seemed scarcely natural to her sparkling style of beauty. Her figure was tall and stately, and the hand in which she held a rose might have served as a model to a sculptor.

"My dear Aglaë," said Madame Louis, with vivacity, "I have set my heart on seeing you well married. Why do you refuse the attentions of our young cavaliers and hold yourself as distant as Diana herself?"

A bright glow flashed into the cheek of the young girl, which died away as quickly as it had arisen, and in a low tone she replied:

"I shall never marry. I came to this determination in my childhood, and I have seen no one who could induce me to change it. The young generals who surround the First Consul have no attractions for me. They are gallant men, but they do not come up to my ideal."

The clear eyes of Hortense were turned full upon the speaker, and she asked with a smile:

"What then is your ideal, *ma chère?*"

Aglaë laughed.

"Oh, a grand and noble man; with courage that never falters, yet with a tenderness of heart that would lead him to help and soothe the humblest creature. His person must correspond with his soul, for a gem in a rough casket would not suit my fastidious taste."

"Well, for an idealist you are not very unreasonable. I believe that I can find one to realize your visionary man."

"Indeed! who can it possibly be? But mine is not a visionary man. I have known the original of my sketch; in my infancy he rescued me from a frightful peril, and to him I gave my childish heart. He is dead, and unless I can find his equal, I shall live and die as Aglaë St. Angeau."

"Who then was this wonderful man?"

"He was known to us as M. Michel, though my father suspected that was not his true name. He entered the French army, and was in a fair way to achieve distinction, when his life was cut short by an assassin. I was then but ten years old, but the blow nearly destroyed me. Oh, yes, Madame, child as I was, I loved him far better than I shall ever love another. Through all the vicissitudes and dangers that beset us in the days of the Terror, throughout all our wanderings, I managed to preserve a portrait of him which was painted by my mother, and from it I have had a miniature taken which I always wear next my heart."

"Sentimental child! Let me look at this souvenir; I wish to see if the hero to whom I wish to give you at all resembles him."

"To whom do you allude, Madame?"

"Show me the picture, Mademoiselle, and then I will tell you."

With some reluctance Aglaë drew forth a gold case, and touching a spring, it opened and revealed a head of singular power and nobility of outline. Hortense uttered an exclamation, and rapidly said:

"Why, Aglaë, you have only been quizzing me. Do you already know General Ney?"

"Only through his fame. But why do you regard me so strangely? I have spoken the simple truth to you."

"And this picture, worn next your heart, is really not one of him? It is incredible, for the likeness is perfect. He is older now, and has a greater air of command, but at twenty this medallion might have been taken for him."

Aglaë pressed her hand upon her heart, and eagerly asked:

"Who then is General Ney? What are his antecedents?"

"No one knows much of them, for like nearly all of our distinguished military men, he has risen by the force of his own genius. It is said that his father lives in Sarre Louis, and is a respectable mechanic there; but Ney has soared so far above his family that he can hold little intercourse with them—they have ceased to be of his world."

"Yet the tie of blood is strong, Madame; it should never be broken. Your hero has a flaw in his escutcheon, which his resemblance to *my* hero will not induce me to overlook."

"My dear Aglaë, no one accuses the General of unkindness to his family. On the contrary, he is extremely liberal toward them; but if you should become Madame Ney, I think you will be well contented that he shall give them money, in place of removing them from their true sphere and attempting to drag them upward with himself. They would only clog the wings of the Eagle, and prevent him from soaring to the height he is bound to gain. The First Consul already regards General Ney as his right hand, and no distinction will be too great for him if he pursues his career as he has commenced it."

Aglaë laughed merrily:

"And you have really formed the design of bestowing my hand on this magnificent cavalier? Dear Madame Louis, what claim have I to such preferment?"

"You have youth, beauty and fortune; what more can even General Ney ask in the wife he may choose?"

"But he may not choose a wife at all. I have heard that he is nearly forty, and still unmarried."

"I should scarcely believe him to be over thirty, and besides he is eminently handsome, with that air of distinction which stamps itself on men of a high order of genius. The First Consul wishes his Generals to marry, and with their wives form a sort of court around himself. He has signified this desire to General Ney, and—shall I tell you his reply?"

"Mademoiselle St. Angeau changed color, and looked uneasy. She quickly said:

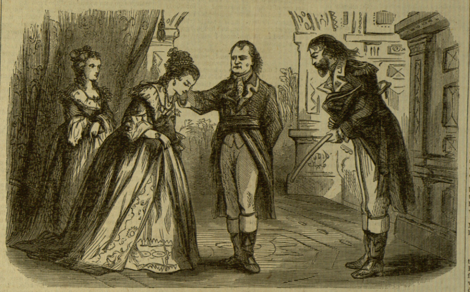
"Pray do so, if I am interested in it."

"You are more deeply interested in it than any one else, for he said that among the beauties of the Consulate but one had any charms for him. That one was Mademoiselle St. Angeau; and if she could be induced to accept his devotion, he might think of marrying."

Aglaë listened in astonishment.

"General Ney can never have seen me, I am sure. If we had ever met, I must have remembered him from the resemblance you say he bears to this picture. It is very strange that he should have selected one so utterly a stranger to him."

"He has seen you at the theatre. He was present on the night the First Consul's life was in such imminent danger; he remarked your bearing on that occasion, and came to the conclusion that you would make a fitting wife for a hero. Now you know all I can tell you. I undertook to prepare you for the overtures of the general, at the request of the First Consul himself."



THE IMPERIAL MATCHMAKER.

Aglaë listened in great perturbation. She had no wish to marry, and she feared the imperious will of Bonaparte, which already made itself felt on those that surrounded him. She was the chosen friend of Madame Louis, and warmly attached to her; Hortense still formed a part of her mother's household, and Aglaë knew that a refusal from her to receive this new pretender to her favor would be punished by banishment from Malmaison. After a painful pause, she said:

"I will think of this, Madame; and after consulting with my parents, I will cause my decision to be made known to the First Consul. Thank you for the kindness which induced you to undertake this mission. Let the affair end as it will, I trust that it will make no difference in our friendship."

"None, my dear; for I feel that it will end as I wish," was the tranquil response. "Only see your new lover, let him plead his own cause, and I answer for the result."

Tears sprang to Aglaë's eyes, and she said:

"Ah, Madame, you do not comprehend how fanatically I have devoted myself to a memory; how fondly I have cherished the image that first impressed my childish fancy. I admit that you have awakened in me a desire to see this *preux chevalier*, who so strangely resembles my early friend. I will not refuse to receive him, for the wish of the First Consul must be regarded as a command by me, but I cannot promise to give him my hand."

"No—not until he asks it," replied Hortense, gaily; "and, as I live, he is at this moment crossing the park in company with Napoleon. They are coming in this direction, and you will soon be able to judge yourself if General Ney resembles your cherished picture."

Aglaë became very pale as she asked:

"Ah, Madame, was not this meeting arranged beforehand? Have you not drawn me into a snare?"

"By no means. Napoleon knows your father's livery, and while the carriage waits, he knows that you must be with me. The general has come to see him on business, which he interrupts to present him to you."

"Then there is absolutely no escape?"

"None—unless you make an ignominious flight before the conquering hero comes. Recall your color and your smiles, dear Aglaë; there is nothing formidable in being presented to a man who, at present, only asks to be received as a friend. Leave the future to take care of itself, and be your own charming, fascinating self again."

A bright flush stole to the cheek of the young girl as she watched the approach of the two figures upon the lawn. Napoleon, in his plain gray suit, and military hat, was already familiar to her, and the stately looking man who walked beside him, in the rich uniform of a French general, lost nothing by being brought in comparison with the greatest man of his day. There was an air of deference toward his companion, which did not derogate from the self-respect and independence of character which was read in every line of his noble face, in every movement of his subtle and powerful frame.

As he drew nearer, a sudden trembling seized Mademoiselle St. Angeau, and she murmured:

"It is incredible. I remember Michel as he walked to and fro upon our lawn, and the very movements of this stranger are the same. Yet, it is impossible. Michel is in his grave, and this man cannot be he, in spite of this marvellous resemblance."

By a violent effort she controlled herself, and stood calm and self-possessed when the First Consul and General Ney were announced. The former advanced, and presented his companion to the two ladies; then, pinching Aglaë's ear, he said, in a low tone:

"I have brought my greatest hero to lay his trophies at your feet, Mademoiselle. See that you receive them as becomes his deserts. Ah, I know that you will encourage no lovers, but this time, nay will bear the alteration of a letter, and I shall congratulate you as Madame Ney. No reply, if you please, Mademoiselle, for I have decided that it shall be so, and I am not used to contradiction when I have set my heart on a thing."

"It seems to me, General, that you are assuming the imperial style," said the young girl, with slight hauteur. "My parents are the persons to be consulted in the disposal of their only child."

Napoleon regarded her searchingly, and a slight frown contracted his brow; but he laughed, and said:

"All in good time, Mademoiselle. I show you the prize; set your cap in its most becoming fashion, for I assure you he is worth winning."

There was something so quizzical in his expression, that Aglaë could not resist a smile, and at that moment her eye caught that of Ney, who had been talking with Madame Louis with that air of chivalrous gallantry seldom found among the distinguished military men that surrounded Napoleon.

The look sent a strange thrill through her heart; she replied with evident effort to the few words he addressed to her, and her fluctuating color, her faltering voice, showed him that she was deeply moved.

"Can it be possible that she remembers me yet?" he thought; and unconsciously his voice took a tenderer inflection as he continued to speak to her.

The two spectators remarked this agitation on the part of the usually calm and self-possessed Aglaë with secret triumph; for the proposed union was a project of Hortense's, into which the First Consul had eagerly entered. Mademoiselle St. Angeau was a favorite with him; Ney was one of his most trusted friends, and the present interview had been adroitly planned between them

In a few moments Aglaë recovered her usual dignified self-possession, and conversed with her new acquaintance with the ease of one accustomed to society. Napoleon and Madame Louis joined in the conversation, and Ney was charmed by the graceful sallies of the young girl. To the banter of the First Consul she returned such replies as made him feel that the game was not entirely in his own hands, and he enjoyed the racy independence which gave her courage to retort on him in his own vain of pleasantry. Half an hour slipped away, and Napoleon suddenly said:

"Come, General, we have played the part of idlers long enough in this hall of Circe. Let us return to the business of life."

With a significant glance at Aglaë, he whispered:

"Do not break your heart, Mademoiselle, for you shall see my friend ere long in your father's house."

They made their adieux, and left the two ladies together. Unconscious that she was observed by her companion, Aglaë watched the receding form of him who had so deeply impressed her. Hortense laughingly said:

"It has happened as I predicted, *ma chère*. You are struck with this noble and handsome man, and you will at last consent to embrace the destiny of your sex. You will become a happy and honored wife."

The face of Aglaë crimsoned, and she hastily said:

"Oh, Madame, this is jumping to conclusions rather too rapidly. General Ney is a remarkable man; he is one any woman may be proud to win, but my interest in him arises from his inexplicable resemblance to one who lies in an obscure grave. While we spoke together, it seemed to me that my lost friend stood before me—older, but not graver than in those early days; for Michel had known great suffering, and my childish caresses first brought smiles to his sad lips, after the blow that struck him to the earth."

"What, then, was the source of his sorrow?"

"We never knew; he carefully concealed his past life. We only knew him as our benefactor, and as one possessing the noblest and tenderest of souls. After the service to which I have referred, he frequently visited our chateau, and became one of our best friends."

"Tell me of this exploit. How did he rescue you, and from what danger?"

Aglaë, with vivid eloquence, related the escape of the leopard, and the gallant attack made on him by Rudolph. Hortense listened with intense interest, and when the recital was finished, she said:

"This is just such an act as the daring courage of Ney would lead him to perform. Napoleon has remarked him in the front of battle, and he says that such cool impassive skill and valor as he exhibits is unequalled even among the brave warriors who have won their laurels under his leadership. Weigh well what I have said, Aglaë, and do not permit a romantic dream to mar the brilliant destiny that may be yours."

Aglaë smiled faintly, made some light reply, and soon afterward took leave of her friend to return to her father's hotel in Paris.

Wrapped in strange perplexity, alarmed at the new and thrilling emotions that assailed her, she recalled the expression of the eyes that had lately rested on her, and feared to analyze the new feelings that had been aroused in her heart. During the horrors of the French Revolution, M. St. Angeau, like many other wealthy landed proprietors in France, had been driven from his chateau, which was plundered and burned.

After many trying vicissitudes, in which he narrowly escaped the all-devouring guillotine, he made his escape with his wife and daughter to Geneva, where they lived till the restoration of order in his native country. Then he returned to France, gathered up the wreck of his fortune, and became a banker in Paris. He possessed much financial talent, and soon became conspicuous for his daring and success. Wealth flowed in apace, and now he occupied a handsome hotel in Paris, and lived in a style of elegance suited to his prosperous fortunes.

Aglaë St. Angeau and Hortense Beauharnais had been placed in the same school, and there the intimacy sprung up which resulted in a warm attachment between them; though until this day, Aglaë had never before spoken so freely of her childish romance. Hortense vaguely knew that some tender memory prevented her friend from responding to the overtures of the lovers which her beauty and fortune drew around her; but how deep a hold this past affection had upon her heart she was far from comprehending.

Aglaë sprang up the steps which led to her mother's apartments, entered her exquisitely furnished boudoir, and threw herself in the maternal arms with a burst of emotion that alarmed her.

"What is it, my daughter? What has happened to excite you thus," tenderly inquired Madame St. Angeau.

"Oh, mamma, I have seen Michel's wraith; a man who looks, speaks, moves as he did, yet he cannot be the same. I feel like one who has been walking in a dream for the last few hours."

"Michel! Ah, I hoped that fantasy had passed away, Aglaë. It is not well to let a phantom from the dead stand between you and happiness. Your father and I think it quite time for you to be settled in life, and he is becoming impatient at your refusal of so many eligible offers of marriage. He was with me but now, and spoke with displeasure of your rejection of Count D'Ernonville. He is young, handsome, and of ancient family; what more can you ask in the husband you may choose?"

"Only to be able to love him," replied Aglaë, with some bitterness. "Why shall I be forced to marry, when I already have all that is necessary to my happiness? Since you and my father are so anxious to get rid of your only child, I promise to accept the next suitor that presents himself. There, Madame, I hope that will satisfy you."

She threw herself back upon her chair, pale and excited, and her mother regarded her with astonishment.

"Aglaë, never before have you spoken to me in this manner. What has happened to you, my child? The next suitor may be one your father and I will not approve, so make no rash pledges."

"Oh, I do not, Madame. I have seen my new admirer; he wears the semblance of my early friend; and if my heart ever responds to love, it will be to that which he offers me. General Ney has seen me in public, he was presented to me this morning by the First Consul himself, and I have reason to believe that he will soon seek the acquaintance of my father and yourself."

"General Ney is a gallant man, and a distinguished officer, but he has risen from the people, and the young count would have been a more suitable match for a St. Angeau. Though your father is now a banker, Aglaë, I do not forget that we are of as good blood as any family in France."

"True, ma'ma," replied Aglaë, tranquilly, "but events have changed all that. A man of the people rules France, who has summoned around him a band of heroes that carry all before them. General Ney looks far more like a prince than did the late King of France, if his portraits do him justice. His origin is veiled in the splendor of his achievements, and since it is your will that I marry, you must accept this plebeian as your son, or do without one."

"Child, I do not know you under this new phase of character. Why should you resent the natural desire of your parents to replace you in the sphere in which you were born! Count D'Ernonville can give you rank and position; he is of the ancient noblesse, and he is an excellent young man besides."

"Oh yes—mawkish as a goblet of sweetened water. I will not marry the count, but if General Ney asks my hand I will give it to him. I do not place this noble, self-made man on a level with the dainty aristocrat, who seeks me because my probable fortune will restore the tarnished lustre of his own. If I accept a husband at all, it shall be one worthy of the sacrifice I make to your wishes and those of my father."

Aglaë arose, swept out of the room, and went to her own apartment to draw forth the miniature she had shown Madame Louis, dream over it, and marvel at the tender interest with which she already regarded the stranger who so strongly resembled it. A secret attraction which she could not fathom, seemed to draw her toward this acquaintance of a few hours' standing, and she felt a sort of self-contempt that already, in spirit, she had broken her vow to the dead.

Aglaë appeared at dinner paler than usual, but most becomingly dressed, and her father viewed her toilette with approbation. Toward the close of the repast, M. St. Angeau said:

"I expect a call from a very distinguished man this evening, and it is my wish to present him to you, and to my daughter, Madame. I hope you have no engagement which will take you from home?"

"We had one, but I have sent an excuse, as Aglaë declines going out."

"So much the better, for General Ney is not a person to be slighted, and I wish to offer him the hospitalities of my house."

"General Ney! Is he to be our guest?"

"Is there anything extraordinary in that? Nearly all the Republican generals have been received here; and as he comes to me with an introduction from the First Consul himself, I shall extend to him every courtesy that lies in my power."

Madame St. Angeau glanced toward her daughter, but she sat calm and impassive. She comprehended that beneath that quiet exterior lay a deep resolve, and, with a sigh, she gave up the hope of calling the young count her son. She was a tender and judicious mother, and she soon reconciled herself to her disappointment, with the consoling thought that her daughter would at last marry—that her future husband was one of the rising men of the day, whose fame would compensate for lack of high birth.

When they were again alone, she tenderly kissed Aglaë, who comprehended from this action that her mother conceded to her the right to fix her own destiny. She returned the caress, and whispered:

"You will see your future son to-night, Mamma, and I know beforehand that you will like him."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE BETROTHAL.

M. St. Angeau was alone in his private sanctum when a servant announced General Ney. He advanced to meet his guest, and as the light fell upon his features he started back, and surveyed him with an expression of surprise and doubt. Recovering himself, he said:

"Excuse me, Monsieur, but your air and manner brought a deceased friend so vividly to my memory, that for an instant I could have believed him before me. You are welcome beneath my roof, General, as are all the gallant defenders of France."

"Thanks, M. St. Angeau; it is my desire to be well received by you, for you hold in your hands my future happiness."

The voice of the speaker was slightly tremulous, and he was evidently much moved. St. Angeau listened with surprise, but he courteously said:

"What can I do to serve the friend of the Ruler of France? I do not know in what manner I can be instrumental in promoting your happiness, Monsieur."

"I have seen your daughter, and I came hither to ask your permission to woo her as my future wife?"

The father smiled, and then a cloud flitted over his brow.

"General, my daughter is a singularly capricious young creature. She has refused many brilliant offers, and declares her intention to remain single. I have combatted this idea in vain, and I despair of gaining her consent to give her hand to any one."

"Why is this? Has any previous disappointment caused this resolution on the part of so charming a woman as Mademoiselle St. Angeau?" asked Ney, with emotion, for he felt as if the child he had so tenderly loved should, in her fair maturity, belong to himself alone.

"It results from no serious entanglement. A mere childish fancy for one who saved her life many years ago, induces my daughter to devote herself to his memory. The person I refer to is dead, but Aglaë is peculiar, and she chooses to cherish his memory to the exclusion of any living lover."

While M. St. Angeau thus spoke, he earnestly regarded his companion. The light that flashed from his eyes, the smile that swept over his expressive mouth, revealed the exultation with which this assurance was received. Ney decisively said:

"With your permission, I will endeavor to win the heart of your daughter; this childish memory cannot be so tenacious as to preclude all hope of success."

"If any one can do this, General, it is yourself; for you are marvellously like the friend of whom I have spoken. Nay—it seems impossible that you should not be the same. Michel, why do you wear a mask to me? What is the mystery of your life? If you really seek to gain the hand of my daughter, why should you shrink from revealing your identity to one who is bound to you by such deep obligations?"

Ney frankly grasped the hand that was extended to him, and his voice vibrated with deep feeling as he said:

"I sought to woo your daughter as General Ney, but as Michel I alone would have married her. I wished, for a season, to maintain my incognito, but you have penetrated it, and now I have only to relate to you the singular series of events which have placed me in my present position; but this must be done under the strictest pledge of secrecy."

"Assuredly, if you wish it. But why have you so long consented to remain as dead to your best friends?"

"That has been a source of bitter regret to me; but the course I pursued was imposed on me by imperative necessity. Listen to the story I have to relate, and then you will comprehend all the difficulties of my position."

The two drew their seats nearer together, and in low earnest tones Ney related the strange incidents which led to his adoption of his present name, and gave him a captain's commission in the French army. He then lightly sketched his career since that epoch; it had been signalized by many brilliant services to the country, for which he had been rewarded by the high rank he now bore.

When he had finished M. St. Angeau said:

"It is a strange, wild story; but I do not see how you could have acted differently toward your friends. Your secret was too important to be left at the discretion of others. But how have you managed with reference to the family of your deceased cousin? Have they never suspected anything?"

"My life has been too busy to afford me an opportunity to visit them, and you can readily comprehend that I was not anxious to be brought in contact with those before whom I should have been compelled to play a part. I have been liberal to them; more so, perhaps, than their son would have been, for I felt that I had a debt to cancel. And now that all has been satisfactorily explained, what answer do you make to my proposal for the hand of your daughter?"

"Only win Aglaë's consent and you have mine," was the frank response. "Your supposed death nearly cost the poor child her own life, for she was ill for months after the news arrived. I believe the picture her mother painted of you has been the shrine of her devotions ever since. In all our vicissitudes she managed to preserve it, and it still hangs in her chamber."

Ney listened with rapture. He said:

"Ah! how sweet is this new hope that dawns on my weary and broken life. In my youth I loved with desperation a woman who crushed my self-respect—who trampled on my bleeding heart, and inflicted on me the most exquisite torture. The sweet voice of the child I saved first awoke me from the torpor of despair, and I loved her as the messenger of peace and hope. I have cherished her in my soul as its good angel; I scarcely hoped to meet her again; but a few weeks ago I saw her at the theatre. I felt attracted by her, I could not tell why, for, lovely as she is, there were others as fair around her. I enquired her name, and then I knew that Fate had led me to her presence again. The past love is buried, M. St. Angeau, and your daughter is now the only woman on earth that I would willingly marry. I will endeavor to make her happy, if I am so fortunate as to gain her affections."

"I feel assured of that, my dear General; and now shall we join the ladies?"

"If you please."

"Is it your wish to maintain your incognito toward them?"

"For a season, at least. If I succeed with Aglae, you can communicate to them the secret I have confided to you. If she refuses me, it will be useless to reveal my identity."

"Ah! the knowledge of that will almost ensure your success."

"It may be so; but I wish to see if Aglae is gifted with your penetration. The eye of love should be at least as searching as that of friendship."

"She will detect you, be sure of that; for now I look at you closely, hear your voice, I can see only the Michel of former days. You are many years older; but they have passed lightly over you, and you are handsomer than in your early youth."

"Ah, that is a consoling assurance to a man who aspires to become a bridegroom. Let us seek the ladies. The glimpse I had of Aglaë this morning only increases my desire to see more of her."

"You have seen her, then?"

"Are you not aware that the First Consul presented me to her this morning at Malmaison?"

"And the sly gipsy said nothing of it to me, although I told her at dinner that you would call this evening. There is something unusual in this, for Aglaë is ordinarly as frank as a child, and speaks of what interests her without reserve. Come at once, for I am curious to see the meeting between you."

M. St. Angeau led the way to the drawing-room, in which he found his wife and daughter. Aglaë was playing on the harp, but she turned with perfect self-possession to greet the vistor. Madame St. Angeau, prepared for the resemblance between Ney and their former friend, betrayed no emotion, and M. St. Angeau was disappointed in the effect he expected their entrance to produce.

Aglaë seemed to awake to new and more vivid life in the presence of this stranger, for her parents had never before seen her so brilliant and fascinating as on this evening. She seemed inspired with eloquence, and when she sang, at Ney's request, her pure voice sounded as the echo of a happy spirit suddenly released from doubts and fears that had long oppressed it. He listened as one entranced, and as her hand fell from the harp-strings, he took it in his own and earnestly said:

"I cannot feel as a stranger to you Mademoiselle. It seems to me that, in some former state of being, we must have known and appreciated each other."

Aglaë drew back her hand with an air of reserve; but suddenly her eye fell upon a small mole on his temple, from which he had pushed back his hair. She uttered a faint cry, clasped his hand in both her own, and vehemently said:

"My heart has not deceived me. Yes, we have known each other, but it was on this earth; though why you have played so cruel a part toward the friends that loved you I cannot understand."

Their eyes met in one lightning glance, and he whispered in a voice of deep emotion:

"Aglaë, do you indeed recognize me? Will you consent to love me as you did the Michel of other days?"

"Then you are indeed he?" and she sunk upon a seat completely unnerved by the discovery she had so suddenly made.

In her childhood Aglaë had often toyed with his hair, and the small brown mark which had betrayed him had often been observed by her. M. St. Angeau was watching them, and Ney made a sign to him which he immediately understood. He saw that an explanation was about to take place, and he considerately withdrew his wife that he might give her the clue to what was passing.

Madame St. Angeau listened in amazement, and with difficulty her husband prevented her from rushing back to claim her old friend and welcome him to her house.

When they were left alone, Ney leaned over the half fainting Aglaë and tenderly said:

"Yes, dearest Aglaë, I am that Michel who was once permitted by Heaven to rescue you from imminent peril. Tell me that I then saved the joy and hope of my life and I shall be the happiest of men."

The young girl impulsively drew from her bosom the medallion she had that morning shown to Madame Louis Bonaparte, and smiled brightly as she said:

"Look—behold yourself, and know that I have vowed from childhood that I would be true to the original."

He cast one rapid glance upon the miniature, clasped her to his heart, and whispered:

"Then you will be mine? I can explain all that is past to your satisfaction. I have already done so to your father, and he brought me himself to test the power of your memory."

She extricated herself from his embrace, and stood tearful and blushing before him.

"I have perfect faith in your honor. I can trust you with all that is most precious to me, and I answer that the wish of Napoleon shall not be thwarted. I give you my hand, and with it the heart that has always clung to you."

"And I accept it as the most precious boon that fortune can bestow. Oh, my life was once laid desolate by a demon; but now an angel will chaunt the song of love in my home, and my heart shall cherish her more dearly than it ever did that fair syren who wrought me such bitter woe."

"Bury that memory in oblivion, and let us plant flowers over its grave," said Aglaë with an enchanting smile. "I can well remember that you were a man of sorrow; that my childish wiles brought back smiles to your lips, as I will now bring back joy to your heart."

"That you have already accomplished, my sweet love. In this hour, I would not exchange my fate for that of any living man. Oh, to feel that the one we love is worthy of perfect trust, is sweetest balm to the heart that has suffered from treachery as mine has suffered."

A smile of ineffable tenderness beamed from Aglaë's eyes, as she led him to a sofa, and seated herself beside him. Then she playfully said:

"I am a genuine daughter of Eve, and I am impatient to learn the history of your life since we last met. Tell me all, for even the most minute incident that concerns you, will have deep interest for me."

An hour was passed in explanations, during which many digressions were made, and then Ney asked:

"Will you now bear the name I have won and made glorious for your sake? For in my heart a tender presentiment ever lingered that I should again find you, and claim you as the jewel of my life."

She naively said:

"I feel as if I of right belong to you. Such has ever been my feeling, and this it was which prevented me from accepting the offers of others. My heart comes to you in all the purity and singleness of a first love; see how perfect is my confidence in you, for I speak as freely to you as in those infantile days when you bore me in your arms, and endured all my teazing, tantalizing ways with the patience of a martyr."

"Say rather all your angelic wiles to bring back smiles to the weary lips that closed upon the despair that was in my heart. Dearest Aglaë, you have indeed been an angel of hope and blessedness to me."

"And that early life, Michel?" she tenderly asked. "What was that sorrow which bore so heavily upon you? Have I not the right to know it?"

"The time will come, Aglaë, when I can tell you all; but not now. In this hour ask me not to recall the anguish of those days; it would be like placing a death's head amid a feast of flowers. I will not now sadden your heart and my own, by the recital of that which I would gladly cast into oblivion. Let us contemplate the bright future that opens before us, and forget the dark and tortuous path through which it has been gained."

M. St. Angeau became impatient at this long interview, and at length he came in, and drew near the lovers. Ney arose to meet him, and grasped his hand, as he said:

"Your daughter's penetration proved equal to your own, my friend. She knew me, though by what token she has not yet explained."

Aglaë also arose, and pointed to the mole upon his temple. She said:

"My heart had already recognized you before I saw that betraying mark. I was then assured of what I had before suspected."

"Then my daughter has at last found her true mate?" asked M. St. Angeau, with a smile.

"We ask your blessing," replied Ney, drawing Aglaë's hand within his own. "We have come to an understanding, and Mademoiselle St. Angeau will be my wife."

"And you ask mine too, I hope," said a sweet voice which vibrated with emotion, and Madame St. Angeau advanced from the adjoining apartment. "Dear Michel, I know all, and I pardon you for your long silence, though we have mourned you as dead. But you have come back to us, and all is well."

Ney took the hand she offered, and pressing it to his lips, spoke with deep emotion:

"Ah, Madame, your generous goodness overwhelms me. I ask you for the darling of your heart, but I will not take her from you. I only ask to be received as a son who will make the happiness of your child the study of his life."

"And I fully comprehend that my daughter is most fortunate in the choice she has made," replied the mother.

"And I ratify the contract," said M. St. Angeau, with joyful pride. "*Aglaë was right to wait till the true man appeared; though I have* often been impatient with her coldness and caprice toward the pretenders to her favor. Come, let us sit down, and cozily talk over what has happened, and what must soon follow in the train of these events."

"Yes," replied Ney—"I have a few weeks of leisure, and my happiness must not be delayed. Make my life complete by giving me my bride as soon as may be."

Aglaë ventured a few faint objections to this haste, but they were overruled, and it was settled that in two weeks the marriage should take place. In a few days their betrothal should be announced to the First Consul, and thus become known to the circle to which they belonged.

Supper was announced, and four happier hearts have seldom gathered around the evening meal. The lovers felt that they had at last gained the bourne of peace for which they had so long sighed, and the parents were elated by the brilliant future which lay before their beloved child. As the wife of a distinguished military chieftain, they knew that her position would be far more eligible than even as a countess of the ancient régime, and they were also warmly attached to their proposed son-in-law.

They separated at a late hour, with a promise from Ney to dine with them on the following day; and Aglaë went to her room to muse over the incidents of the evening, and to give up her heart to the great and unexpected happiness which had so suddenly dawned upon her.

She compared her cherished picture with the original as he now appeared, and decided in her own mind that Ney was far handsomer than the sad-looking Michel of other days.

Every hour that the lover could spare from the business which brought him to Paris was devoted to his betrothed, and it was not until the third day after her betrothal that Aglaë found time to drive to Malmaison to inform her friend, Madame Louis, of what had taken place. At the same time Ney went to announce his approaching marriage to the First Consul.

Napoleon heard it with surprise, and merrily said:

"By my faith, General, you storm ladies' hearts as expeditiously as you take the enemy's batteries. This young lady has hitherto refused all lovers, yet you, like Cæsar, can say, 'I came, I saw, I conquered.'"

"Such has been my good fortune, my General; but Madame Louis can probably explain to you that I owe my success to a strong resemblance between myself and one to whom Mademoiselle St. Angeau has been attached from her infancy."

"Ah, well, women are strange riddles, and the sentimental ones the most incomprehensible of all. But Mademoiselle St. Angeau is a clever girl, and I think will not be less true as a wife because she has cherished absurd fancies. You will cure her of all these, and make her a sensible woman."

The listener smiled, but he did not explain that he owed his happiness to those very fancies which rendered Aglaë different from the most of her sex.

When Aglaë, with many blushes, and much internal perturbation, revealed to her friend that she was already won by a man Hortense believed to have been known to her but a few days, she was relieved by the sweet and womanly manner with which her communication was received. Madame Louis kissed and congratulated her on the choice she had made, without referring to the brief wooing. She spoke only of the future, and the happiness in store for the bride elect, and Aglaë parted from her with a stronger feeling of attachment for her than she had ever felt before.

As she was taking leave, Hortense said:

"There will be a grand reception at the Tuileries this week, and you must appear there with your betrothed. Ah, dear Aglaë, many hearts will envy you the noble and handsome cavalier you have chosen."

"Or, rather, who has chosen me. I shall certainly come, and on that occasion my dress shall be something unique. I shall wear it as a delicate compliment to him who so strongly resembles him to whom I owe my life."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

A VICTIM OF MISTAKES.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

I am the victim of mistakes—at least I always have been, and perhaps always shall be. Some people seem born to such kind of luck, and I am one of them. Wherever I go, somebody is sure to mistake me for somebody else.

Once, while travelling in a neighboring parish, I stopped at a quiet inn, and had just got snugly ensconced in the apartment I was to occupy for the night, when—

"Suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping,
Rapping at my chamber door."

Well, I didn't hesitate so long as the hero of Poe's Raven, but "opened wide the door" forthwith, and saw, not "darkness there and nothing more," but a human figure. In point of fact, as the immortal Micawber would say, there was a man there.

"How do you do, sir?" said the man, in a dry, solemn tone.

"Pretty well, I thank you—how's yourself?" I replied.

"You don't know me, I 'spose!" said the stranger, giving my hand some two or three pump-handle shakes, and deliberately pushing his way in, as if he had taken the room on shares with me.

"I have not that honor, I believe," I answered.

"Well, I am simply Deacon Byles—Deacon Jonathan Byles, at your service,—you know me now, I presume?"

"I think I ought to, after your telling me your name."

"Yes, well, you got down sooner than you expected, I calculate?" pursued the deacon, helping himself to a chair, and depositing his old, seedy-looking hat on the floor.

"On the contrary," said I, "I didn't get down quite so soon—at least by a day. I intended to have been here yesterday."

"Indeed! Why, I didn't expect you before to-morrow. Well, you should have come to my house at once. Come, get your things and go over now—my wife expects you to supper. I've explained matters to Mr. Brown, the landlord."

"Well, permit me to thank you and your wife for your kind interest in my welfare, and to ask you, as a particular favor, to explain matters to me, as well as to Mr. Brown, the landlord?"

"I don't understand you," said the deacon, with a look of some surprise.

"Nor I you," said I.

"Why, aint you the Rev. Mr. Calkins, that's going to preach here next sabbath?"

"No, I aint."

"Dear me! p-h-e-w! I thought you was. Umph! hum! ahem! I've made a mistake, I guess."

"I guess so, too."

"Your name, then, isn't——"

"No, not at all."

"What might it be?"

"It might be Corkle—Adam Corkle. In point of fact—as my immortal friend, Micawber, would say—it is!"

"*Well, that's right curious!*" mused the deacon. "Adam Corkle—Amasa Calkins! A. C., you see, stands for both; and A. C., you see, my son saw on your portmanteau when you first arrived, and that's the way the mistake come, which I hope you'll pardon!"

I assured the deacon of my unreserved forgiveness, and had the honor of three more pump-handle shakes at parting.

On another occasion, after riding for miles, on a hot-day, over a very dusty road, I stopped before the door of a pleasant farm-house, to get a drink of water. Three little tow-heads, who were wallowing in a sand-bank near by, ran screaming into the house; and by the time I had dismounted and reached the door, a rather pretty woman, on the sunny side of thirty, came bounding out, with extended arms, and, before I had time to speak, threw them around my neck and gave me a sobbing embrace.

Now this might have been rather pleasant under different circumstances—but I felt its mutability. I knew it couldn't last—it was a mistake—a mistake, too, that the woman would probably regret more than I should. So I only waited till she began to sob forth something about her dear, dear brother, when I gently disengaged her arms, and quietly informed her that I hadn't the pleasure of being that happy individual. Then she got scared, and I got embarrassed; but I finally managed to turn it off with some pleasant remarks and the distribution of a few loose coins among her tow-headed children.

Another time, while quietly picking my way through the crowded thoroughfare of a large city, a well-dressed, pompous-looking man came hurrying up, and said, in a short, sharp tone:

"So, sir, I have found you at last, have I?"

"It looks that way to me," I quietly replied.

"Yes, sir! well, sir! I want to know if you intend to settle that account between us?"

"Not aware, sir, that we ever had any business dealings."

"Well, that's cool, at all events. My name is Birch, sir—William Birch—of the firm of Birch & Co., of * * * * street."

"Happy to make your acquaintance, Mr. Birch—though I think you might have introduced yourself in a more polite and gentlemanly manner."

"Introduce myself, sir! introduce myself!—what do you mean, sir?"

"Just what I said—no more—no less."

"Sir! sir!" began Mr. Birch, with a look of rage, "you're a——"

"Hold up!" interrupted I, sternly: "if you call me any hard name, I shall knock you down. There is my card. It is possible you have mistaken me for somebody else."

He almost snatched the card from my hand, and read the name with a mingled expression of surprise, doubt and embarrassment.

"Then your name is not Israel Higginson, of * * * * * * *?"

"I hope not," returned I, "since he seems to be in debt to a man who lacks the dignity of a gentleman."

"If this is so, sir, I must crave your pardon!" he rejoined, in a crest-fallen tone. "Really, the likeness is so strong! and he is such a great rascal, that I——"

"Shall I consider your remarks as complimentary to him or myself?" I again interrupted.

"Ha! I see! I beg your pardon! I am a little confused! I—I——"

"Quite sufficient apology, Mr. Birch—quite sufficient. I fear, if you venture to say any more, you will blunder again. I quite forgive you—I do indeed—and have the honor to wish you a very good day."

I left him in the act of gathering up the scattered fragments of his demolished pomposity.

Again, while travelling in a rail-car to a distant city, a rough sort of a man entered it at one of the principal stations, and, after looking sharply at each of the male passengers, walked up to me, tapped me on the shoulder, and rather gruffly informed me that he had a warrant for my arrest.

"Who in thunder am I taken for this time?" exclaimed I, while all the passengers looked as if they believed me guilty of highway robbery and murder.

"I take you for a thief!" said the officer, bluntly, as he produced and ran his eye over the warrant. "You're down here," he continued, "as Joe Barker, alias Ned Williams, alias Frank Coffee. Come, out with you! I've no time to wait!"

In vain I assured him he was mistaken in the man, and that I was an honest and highly respectable gentleman.

"You'll have to prove that before a magistrate, or go into a snug jug," he replied.

So I was dragged off, escorted by an unsympathizing crowd of all the worst-looking men and boys in the place, to lose my liberty, passage and baggage, and be required to prove I wasn't a thief, nor "any other man" except myself. This I couldn't do, and so I was held a prisoner and transferred to another State, where, before the time for my trial came on, the writ of *habeas corpus* permitted an examination, which resulted in an honorable discharge from custody of my precious person. Of course, I felt very grateful to the law, for not being sent to the penitentiary for merely looking like a notorious thief.

One instance more and I will close the record; not because of a want of facts of a similar character to continue on with, but because I think I shall have given enough to satisfy every body that it is better to be any body than me.

Business led me to visit one of our smaller Eastern cities, and, while there, I called on an old acquaintance, who lived on the outskirts of the town. My friend was delighted to see me, and insisted on my spending the evening with him, which I did. We played backgammon and drank brandy, drank brandy and played backgammon, till my two dice began to look like four, when I concluded to quit and return to my hotel. My friend would have kept me all night, but I was resolved not to stay, and at a late hour I bade him good-bye and started off, my head a little confused. The streets were poorly lighted, and, being a stranger, who had drank rather more brandy than was good for me, I easily got astray. As I was blundering along through a dark, narrow street, I was suddenly seized by two powerful men, who sprung upon me from a dark passage, and clapped a plaster over my mouth before I had time to call for help. They then hurried me forward and into a carriage that was in waiting just round the first corner, and, getting in themselves, ordered the driver, in a low tone, to make all speed.

Away we went at a furious pace, my kidnappers keeping perfectly silent, and myself getting sober in the shortest possible time. On we went, till the city was left behind, lights were no longer visible, and the houses on the dark road became few and far between. Suddenly we dashed into an enclosure, where everything was still darker, and there the carriage stopped. Then the two men roughly forced me out, and into a dark room, where I could not see my hand before me.

"So, then, you have got him?" said a voice.

"Yes, we have him here at last; but we had to wait a long time for it. We began to fear he had gone out another way."

"You have done well and shall be rewarded," rejoined the first speaker. "*Now, then, away and put on your masks, and let us proceed with the trial.* I suppose you are aware of the charges that will be brought against you?" continued the speaker, apparently addressing me; "and, if proved guilty, of course you know your doom will be death?"

"His mouth is sealed," said one of the others.

"Ah! true! Remove the obstruction and let him speak."

The plaster, which still adhered to my lips, was now jerked off, almost bringing the skin with it, and causing me to utter a slight cry of pain.

"Do not treat him harshly," said the voice of my questioner; "no petty annoyance is proper when a man is about to be tried for his life."

"I think there must be some mistake here," were the first words I uttered. "If, as I now imagine, I am in the presence of a secret organization, I beg you will not make any revelations that can possibly render it dangerous for you to set me at liberty! and that liberty I trust you will be generous enough to grant me, as soon as you discover you have seized the wrong person."

"Ha! what is this?" cried the same voice. "Quick! on with your masks and conduct him to the Hall of Trial! We will see for ourselves."

In a minute I was led into a lighted room, where sat at least twenty men with masks on their faces. The moment I appeared before them there was a general start of surprise, and several exclamations of disappointment.

"Stranger," said the same voice that had before addressed me, "for you are a stranger to all of us, there has indeed been a sad mistake in seizing you for another. We are disposed to rectify it, by returning you to the city, provided you will swear, by all you hold sacred, not to reveal any thing you have seen or heard since your capture."

I took the oath, and half an hour later was set down on the outskirts of the city. The mystery of that strange affair I have never been able to solve.

Really, I am getting nervous. Who shall I be taken for next, I wonder? If I am not hung some day, in mistake for somebody else, I think I shall have reason to be thankful.

◆

METHOD OF REMOVING A RIVAL PRACTITIONER.

The following case is reported to have occurred recently at Bethune, in France:—A medical man, newly arrived in a neighborhood where already there was a highly-esteemed practitioner, in good practice, commenced his career by endeavoring to injure the reputation of this gentleman, resorting to the basest calumnies in order to attain his object. Finding that his efforts to bring M. Bacqueville, the practitioner referred to, into disrepute, had completely failed, he at length spread a report that this gentleman had obtained an infant from a foundling hospital for experimental purposes, and that the child had subsequently been made away with! When this report was fairly in circulation, the calumniator proceeded to a cemetery, disinterred a child, and threw it into a drain on the premises of M. Bacqueville; he then addressed a letter to the authorities, accusing M. Bacqueville of having murdered a child, and pointed out the place where the body would be found. Accordingly, the premises of M. Bacqueville were searched, the body of the child discovered, and that gentleman was taken to prison, where he remained confined for a considerable time. He was at length liberated, on account of there being no evidence against him. From some cause or other, shortly after this, the scandalous proceeding was discovered, and public indignation being roused, the man was brought before the authorities, and charged with an offence *contra bonos mores*, in disinterring a body. He was found guilty, and sentenced to a year's imprisonment, and a fine of 3,000 francs ($600.)

A LAMENT.

BY MRS. JOHN C. WINANS.

I.

Gone, gone, my lone heart cries;
Weep, weep, my weary eyes;
Dark, dark, days that were bright;
All, now, desolate night!
Ah, ha, ha, ha! Ah, ha, ha, me!
Would I were with thee,
Over the sea.

II.

Here, here, shadow and fear;
Creep, creep, ever so near;
Joy, joy, when shall I greet?
Dead, dead, until we meet!
Ah, ha, ha, ha! Ah, ha, ha, me!
Would I were with thee,
Over the sea.

◆

WARP AND WEFT;

OR,

THE COTTON FAMINE.

A TALE OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "THE SOLDIER OF FORTUNE," "DICK TARLETON," "THE STEP MOTHER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

Human faults with human grief confess.—PRYOR.

The widow Hannan could not understand a marriage without a feast, music, and the presence of friends. In vain her daughter assured her that she preferred passing the day quietly, alone, or with herself and brother. The widow's reply was "Rubbish!" such had not been the custom in her young days; she knew better; and, after dispatching Sam to invite their most intimate acquaintances, and secure the services of Blind John for a dance in the evening, sallied out herself, to make the best preparations possible on so short a notice, leaving the bride and bridegroom in possession of the cottage.

The pair, so strangely brought together, sat for some time without speaking a word—Bessie, with her eyes fixed upon the ground; her husband regarding the smoke as it rose up the chimney with a vacant stare.

The silence at length became painful.

"What a singular destiny!" he exclaimed, at last.

"A dream—a hideous dream!" murmured the poor girl, pressing her hand to her brow, and looking round with a bewildered air. "Speak to me, Walter Glyde! Is it true that we have spoken the vow which, in the sight of God and man, binds us to each other?—mocked at a holy ordinance—joined hands without our hearts?"

"Not without mine, Bessie," replied the bridegroom, sadly. "I have loved you for years; but you would never listen to me. Another filled your heart, and all my prayers were vain."

"You knew this?"

"Love is too sharp-sighted to be deceived. I have watched you and John Bentley in your solitary walks; saw you listening to vows which had neither truth nor honor in them, and gnawed my lips in hopeless rage."

"And yet you married me?"

"Gladly."

"Knowing the—the fallen thing I am," added his wife, in a tone in which surprise and contempt were strangely mingled. "I cannot understand this."

"Knowing that you had fallen a victim to his wiles, I made you my wife, Bessie, for I had lost the right to reproach you. My life was in his power."

"*Your life?*"

"There shall be no deceit between us," continued the young man, speaking with increased excitement; "as far as my conduct is concerned. I will speak truthfully—ease my over-full heart by a frank confession of its weakness; perhaps it is the last time that we shall ever converse together."

"What am I to learn?" ejaculated the bride, clasping her hands in terror.

"I need not paint to you, Bessie, the strength of a true passion; you have felt it, and can comprehend it: or the misery—the dull, deadening calm—which succeeds the conviction of its hopelessness. I loved you as men love but once; not with boyish fondness, but manhood's deep devotion. Again and again you rejected me; still I loved on. It was folly—madness; but I could not eradicate the feeling from my breast. Life became hateful to me; solitude a fearful curse—an agony too terrible to be borne. I plunged in dissipation, seeking in its intoxicating whirl oblivion, but only found disgust. The reaction was terrible. I loathed myself—the vices into which I had fallen; made vows of amendment, to be broken whenever the dreadful sense of loneliness fell on me."

Bessie shuddered.

"Can you understand this?"

"But too well."

"The little savings of my well-ordered youth were speedily exhausted," continued her husband. "At the office I had the handling of gold. One night—I knew that John Bentley was to meet you—I found myself penniless; no means of procuring the maddening draught—of joining in the exciting revel. An unholy fire was in my heart—upon my brain. I became a thief!"

"Mercy! shame!" sobbed his wife.

"By altering the invoices and cashing the cheques I continued for a time to conceal my depredations. At last, Bessie, I forged the signature of my employer."

"Forged!"

"You know the punishment?"

"Death!"

"Death," repeated her husband, calmly. "Mr. Bentley made the discovery. I had a long interview with him in his private room. He offered, not safety, that was beyond his power, but concealment for three days, and the means of flight to America."

"You know the rest," he anded, mournfully.

"You consented to sell your name? to become the——"

"The husband of the woman I loved," interrupted Walter Glyde, taking her hand, which Bessie did not attempt to withdraw from him. "It is impossible that you should continue to love this man; the womanly instincts of your nature must revolt at his conduct. It is not bad only—but mean, despicably mean. Leave England with me, accompany me to America. I promise to treat you as a sister, till time shall give me a warmer interest in your heart; and never, by Heaven, Bessie, never shall one word, a look, or thought, reproach you for the past."

"Impossible!" resumed the agitated girl.

"You love him still, then?" said her husband, mournfully.

"Love him!" repeated Bessie, in a tone of scorn. "Walter, I have not given you the right to suspect me of that baseness. I despise him, and loathe myself—loathe my past weakness. Neither my youth, ignorance, nor inexperience can excuse it. The sister of his friend, too! Fallen as you are, and threatened with a felon's doom, I will not insult you by comparing you with John Bentley."

"Oh, thanks, dearest Bessie, thanks!" exclaimed the young man, pressing her hand with fervor to his lips.

"But I dare not accept your offer," added his bride.

"Why not?"

"You would despise me—despise yourself for your weakness."

"Never," replied Walter Glyde. "You forget that I have lost the right to blame. We both have erred, Bessie; but we are still young. The world is before us, and the angel of repentance points brightly to the future."

"We shall speak of this again. Do not press me for my answer now; I require time to collect my thoughts—to examine my heart. Time for prayer," added his wife.

Her husband quitted the cottage, and hastened to his own lodgings, to make such preparation for his departure for America as the time permitted. When he returned, he found that Mrs. Hannan had collected her guests, and only waited his arrival to commence the marriage dinner.

We need scarcely observe that, despite the boisterous mirth of Sam, and one or two of the hands from the mill—his particular friends whom he had invited—the feast was a sad one. Bessie appeared pale and abstracted, and the bridegroom but little impressed with that joy which most men experience on their wedding-day.

His mother-in-law attributed his silent reserve to gentility.

"It be all book-larning," she observed, in a confidential tone to one of her female gossips. "Willie wor just like un; he didn't often larf. I doan't understan' it. Sometimes I think," she added, "that it beant good for childer to be more high larnt nor their parints."

A remark in which her neighbor perfectly agreed.

Whilst the tables were being cleared in the kitchen for a dance, Bessie and her husband retired to the little parlor.

They required no witnesses to their parting.

"Speak to me," said Walter Glyde; "let me know my fate."

"Is the wish—the generous wish you expressed this morning still unchanged?"

"By heavens it is! and stronger than ever. By all——"

"Your word is sufficient," interrupted his wife. "Strange," she continued, with a melancholy smile, "that after the bitter experience I have had in human faith, I should place trust in yours; but I do trust it, implicitly."

"Thanks!—thanks!"

"Hear me patiently. I have thought over all you have urged, and prayed to be directed. If at the end of a year your intentions are unchanged—and should they change, I shall not blame you, Walter, provided you are candid in your dealings with me—I will join you in America."

"In a year?"

"Yes."

"And why not accompany me?"

"Impossible!" said Bessie, with a shudder. "Walter, spare me your questions. I cannot tell you all."

Her husband understood her; and a bitter execration rose to his lips against the heartless wretch who had betrayed her.

"I understand," he muttered, hoarsely; "and will wait—wait!"

"Make no promises," said his wife; "for I have lost the right to hold you to them. Unless you desire—as ardently as you desire it now—my presence in America, you have but to send me word, and I shall never trouble you."

"Trouble!" repeated Walter Glyde. "What a word, Bessie! You know that I shall count the days, the hours, till we meet again. The hope of once more beholding you, of calling you mine, shall stimulate me to honest exertion; for I shall know that I am laboring for you, Bessie. If repentance can wipe out the past, you shall find me worthy of you."

"Remember," said his wife, casting down her eyes and blushing deeply, "that I shall not leave England *alone*. Another perhaps will accompany me."

"Of course, Bessie. Where should your—where should *our child* be but with its mother?"

"Bless you, Walter! bless you for those words!" exclaimed the poor girl, bursting into tears. "You know not the heavy weight they have taken from my heart. I will be true to you, as your own generous nature; devoted as a wife should be. God bless you! Would we had understood each other sooner!"

The sound of Blind John tuning up his fiddle in the kitchen warned them that they had not many minutes more to pass together.

"Before we part," continued his wife, "I have one question to ask. It is not curiosity that prompts it, believe me."

"Ask it."

"It will pain you, Walter."

"Not from your lips."

"What is the amount of your defalcations to Mr. Haman?"

"Two hundred pounds."

"And the proofs, the——. You know what I mean."

"Three invoices, which I altered."

"The names?"

"Burton, Massey, and Long."

"Are there no other proofs?"

"None that could injure me," replied Walter Glyde, mentally wondering what could be her motive for the question.

Bessie wrote down the names, and read them over to him.

"Yes; quite correct."

"And could any one—myself, for example—were the invoices in my hand, make sure they were the same?"

"By the acknowledgment in my own handwriting at the foot of each," replied her husband. "He—that man, I will not name him—exacted it."

"One more question, Walter, and I have done. Where are those fatal papers?"

"In his private desk. I saw him lock them in his letter-case—a black and silver-clasped one."

"Enough," said Bessie, with a sigh. "Now let us speak upon this painful subject no more."

"I must speak of it," exclaimed her husband, greatly agitated; "for I read your generous purpose. You would see him, appeal to his generosity—as well might the lamb appeal to the wolf—to give them up. They are his safety; he will not part with them."

"Not willingly, perhaps," replied his wife.

"Do not, I entreat you; do not degrade yourself by seeing him."

"Walter Glyde," said Bessie, firmly, "you must not, shall not, remain that man's slave; the thought revolts my pride—my woman's instincts—the respect—the love I one day trust to bear you. I shall not descend to entreaties, rest assured of that. Not to save you, myself, all that are most dear to me, could I supplicate the forbearance of John Bentley."

Both shuddered as she pronounced the name.

"What other hope?" demanded the bridegroom, mournfully.

"His fears."

"What can he have to fear?"

"The loss of the prize for which he has sold truth, honor, manhood—all that makes man noble; the rending aside the mask 'neath which he walks the world, without affrighting it by his moral hideousness."

"Trust to my prudence," added the speaker. "I will not see him unless in the presence of a witness."

There was a tap at the door of the little parlor.

"Blind John ha' tuned up his fiddle, lass," said Sam, thrusting his face, beaming with happiness and good-humor, into the room; "we be only waitin' for thee and Walter."

"An instant," replied his sister, "and I am with you."

"All right, Bessie!" exclaimed her brother, as he closed the door.

"And now, farewell," whispered the strangely-wedded bride, extending her hand to her husband. "Within a year, if your resolution remains unchanged, we meet again."

Walter Glyde would fain have pressed her to his breast, in one long, passionate embrace; but the look poor Bessie gave him restrained the impulse, and he contented himself with imprinting a kiss upon her hand.

"Thank you," she murmured, "for respecting me."

No doubt the poor fellow's conduct was generous, even noble, and the way to win a woman's heart.

"Why not accompany me?" he urged.

"Impossible," said his wife, firmly.

"You are right," he replied, after a pause; "it was the agony of parting wrung the wish from me. Forgive me, Bessie; I will not offend again. Heaven bless you and watch over you! On the deep sea, in the busy cities or trackless wilds of the New World, my thoughts will be ever of you, my struggles to render myself worthy of you."

"Worthy of me!" repeated the poor girl, in a tone of deep humility.

"You were unarmed for the conflict," continued her husband, "ignorant of the wily nature of the foe you had to contend with—a child in simplicity against a giant in deceit. No wonder you succumbed. You see him now in his true light—his worthlessness, his baseness; a thing of figures—a calculating machine—a head without a heart."

"I am guarded," said Bessie, "by a yet stronger shield than the knowledge of his hollow nature—*scorn!* It has passed like a hot iron over my bleeding heart; cicatrizing the wound, but leaving a fearful scar. Farewell, Walter. Leave me; in mercy, leave me! and without another word."

Pulling his hat over his brows, to hide the emotion some men would have mocked at, the bridegroom passed rapidly through the kitchen, in the midst of the wondering guests, and disappeared.

"All book-larnin' an' gentility," said the widow Hannan, staring in astonishment after him. "It worn't so in my young days."

"Nor mine," added one of her female friends.

In a few minutes Bessie made her appearance. Her features, though pale, were calm. For the first time during the eventful day she felt strong in resolution.

"Where be thah husband gone to, gal!" demanded her mother.

"You know that I am to remain with you," answered the bride, evasively, "till Walter has prepared a home for me."

"Well, but I——"

"Mother," whispered Bessie, "ask no questions. I require all your kindness—all my own courage."

"Book-larnin'," repeated the widow to herself; "book-larnin'! There never did come any good on't. They can't even marry loik other folks."

"I know you will wish me joy upon my wedding-day," said her daughter, addressing the blind musician.

"That I will," exclaimed the old man. "God bless 'ee! for thah own and thah brother Willie's sake. But this be dull work. Bean't thah agoin' to have a bit o' a dance?"

"Yes."

"Where be thah partner?"

"Here," replied Bessie, taking the hand of her brother Sam.

The good-hearted fellow did not comprehend the affair. He saw that something was wrong, but could not divine exactly what; so, without puzzling his brains, he led off one of the dances peculiar to Lancashire, consisting of a figure, or rather a succession of figures, none but those to the manner born can understand, accompanied by steps Taglioni herself might hopelessly strive to imitate.

We remember once making the attempt. Well, well! it was in our youthful days. We can truly assert that now we are a wiser, if not a better man. That act of folly is not likely to be repeated.

Walter Glyde's abandoning his wife, for so it appeared, on his wedding-day, naturally gave rise to a variety of conjectures. Public opinion, which is very rarely either just or charitable, blamed the bride, who maintained a profound silence upon the subject. Not even the questions of her mother, or Sam, who threatened all kind of vengeance upon his runaway brother-in-law, could elicit a word from her. She knew that her husband was safe from his resentment. Her mind, therefore, was perfectly easy on that point.

It wanted but two days to the marriage of John Bentley and Mary Haman. Sam had gone as usual to his work at the mill, but had not been absent more than an hour when, to the surprise of his mother and sister, he returned home, evidently in a state of great excitement.

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed the widow, "what brings thee back ag'in?"

"God help 'ee, Bessie," said her brother.

"He will help us all if we pray to Him," was the reply.

"Thah may'st begin a prayin' then," continued Sam, "as soon as thah like, for thah hast need on it, my poor lass. I ha' heard of Walter."

"The villain," ejaculated Mrs. Hannan.

"He be off."

"Off!"

"Where to?"

"To America," said her son. "But I'll be after um. No fear o' th' riders preventing on me this time. I'll write to Willie, tell him all about it; leastways, I'll get Mr. Bentley to write to him."

"But be it sartin, lad? be it sartin?" demanded the widow.

"Sartin!" repeated Sam. "Tom Halliday saw um on board the ship at Liverpool Docks; shook hands wi' um, and wished um a good voyage."

"A good voyage, and he runnin' away from his wife!" said Mrs. Hannan, bitterly.

"Tom Halliday didn't know that, mother."

"I wish I'd seen um."

"So do I," said Sam. "I'd ha' wished um a good voyage. I'd ha' wrung his neck, or broken his back for um."

"The Lord help thee, gal," exclaimed the widow, regarding Bessie, who heard the information without betraying either surprise or emotion. "I belave she be gone clean out of her senses. I wish Willie wor here; for I can't understan' it."

"It will be clear in time," observed her daughter.

"The Lord grant it, lass! the Lord grant it! Tha'rt a puzzle to me; I can't make head or tail on thee. Thah hasn't my spirit. If thah fayther had run away from me on his weddin'-day, I'd ha' run'd him! He'd ne'er tried that trick ag'in."

"I don't think he would, mother," said Sam.

"What was the name of the ship?" inquired his sister.

"The Falcon."

"And when did it sail?"

"Yesterday."

"He is safe, then," thought Bessie, and the conviction brought relief to her mind; for it left her at liberty to act.

An hour later brought her a letter from her husband, confirming the intelligence of his having sailed, for it had been written at the mouth of the Mersey, and given to the pilot when he quitted the ship.

"What does the villain say for himself?" inquired her mother.

"Nothing."

"What! nothing? Leave my daughter! leave his wife! cut off to America! on his weddin'-day! an' then write and say nothink. Th' world sartinly must be coming to an end."

"You shall know all in time, mother," whispered Bessie, as she left the room. "Have but a little patience with me."

"Patience!" repeated the widow. "Lord knows I ha' need on it."

"That thah hast," said her son.

Whilst they were still discussing the extraordinary occurrence, her daughter passed through the kitchen, and left the cottage.

"Dressed in her very best!" ejaculated Mrs. Hannan.

"Yes."

"She bean't ashamed to show her face, at any rate."

"Why should she, mother? It aint her fault if Walter Glyde ha' turned out a villain."

"Sam!"

"Yes, mother."

"Never thah take to book-larnin'; mind that."

"I don't intend it, mother."

CHAPTER XXVI.

Alack! alack! ah, well a day!
All that's fair must perish;
All that's bright must pass away,
Of the things we fondly cherish:
And the heart grows cold,
As the frame grows old,
And affections cease to flourish,
As a tree on the plain,
When the gentle rain
Its roots no longer nourish.
This is an oft-told tale, yet, sooth
To say, it's but the simple truth. ANON.

"Two days more, and I shall be master here," thought John Bentley, as, arm-in-arm with his future father-in-law, he walked into the counting-house.

The cashier no sooner perceived Mr. Haman, than he caught up the ledger from his desk, and followed him into the private office.

"Some other time; I have business now," said his employer.

"Can't wait, sir. Impossible! quite impossible! Such a thing never occurred before! I am uneasy in my mind; there is an error in the accounts."

"An important one?"

"All errors are important, Mr. Bentley," observed the old man, drily.

The head of the firm smiled. The speaker had been in the office ever since he first started in business, and he was accustomed to the abrupt manner of his cashier.

"Mr. Bentley means the amount."

"About two hundred pounds, sir."

"In whose accounts?"

"Burton, Massey, and Long's."

"Who received them?"

"Walter Glyde, sir."

The two gentlemen exchanged glances. They had just heard the rumor of Bessie's husband's flight to America, and been discussing the motive.

"We have important business to attend to this morning," said Mr. Haman, "and cannot go through the books now. In a day or two I shall have more leisure."

"I can't rest till I have made it out, sir," replied the cashier, in a piteous tone; "I don't know what to think—whom to suspect. My responsibility is at stake."

"Not in the least."

"My character for punctuality, at any rate," urged the old man, greatly distressed. "Only to think! thirty years in the office, and never failed to balance my accounts before! It is enough to drive me out of my senses."

"Well! well!" said Mr. Haman, good-naturedly; "come in an hour, and Mr. Bentley and myself will go through the books with you."

"Thank you, sir."

"Meanwhile we can't see any one."

"I'll take care of that," thought the cashier, as he returned to his seat. "No one shall see them till this affair is cleared up."

An hour had nearly elapsed when Bessie made her appearance at the office. The clerks, as our readers may naturally suppose, felt anxious to get a peep at the deserted bride, and eagerly inquired her wishes.

"To see Mr. Haman."

"Can't see him," called the cashier from his desk.

"If he is occupied, I will wait."

"Can't wait."

"Mr. Haman is engaged with his future son-in-law, in his private room," said one of the young men, good-naturedly.

"Which is it?"

The informant pointed to the door, without the slightest idea that she would avail herself in the manner she did of the information. Inclining her head, as if to thank him, she passed on, and knocked gently.

"Come in!" cried a voice, impatiently.

The next instant the door closed behind her. The clerks could not repress a laugh.

"What's that?" demanded the cashier, looking up from his ledger.

"She has gone in, sir."

"Gone in!" he repeated. "Dear me! Why, I told her Mr. Haman was engaged. I shall never get this error set right. Where are Burton, Massey, and Long's invoices?"

"Mr. Bentley has them, sir," replied the entering clerk.

"Ah!"

"Bessie!—I beg pardon, Mrs. Glyde!" exclaimed Mr. Haman, the instant he recognized her. "I am sorry, very sorry, to hear rumors that your marriage has turned out unfortunate."

"It has not been the greatest misfortune of my life, sir," was the reply.

"What does she mean by that, John?" whispered the head of the firm to his future son-in-law, whose countenance at the sight of his victim had assumed a livid paleness.

"Most probably to her husband's conduct before marriage," answered the hypocrite, in an under voice.

"Very likely."

"You have heard of Walter's departure?" she continued.

"Yes."

"And have you discovered the cause?"

"No, not exactly. Probably I suspect it."

"I have come," continued Bessie, speaking in the same even tone, "to explain it to you. Walter has been led into a fatal error. He has robbed you, sir. Unhappily, I was partly the occasion of his fall."

"You the cause!"

"Yes. I rejected him; but I did not know his worth then. I never wished to be eloquent so much as I do now, that I might paint to you his shame! his contrition! his remorse! Compelled to fly his country on his wedding-day, too! Little did I imagine," added the unhappy pleader, "when I gave him my hand at the altar, that I bestowed it upon a felon."

As she pronounced the last word, she fixed her eyes meaningly upon her destroyer.

"Poor girl! poor girl!"

"You will forgive him, sir?" she continued. "We will work hard, both of us, to replace the money. Think of the disgrace! the infamy! the shame to my brother, who saved your life. Mr. Haman, it is for his sake I implore your mercy; I dare not ask it for my own."

"I will forgive him," said the cotton-spinner.

"Bless you, sir! bless you!"

"You have awakened a name and influence I should be ungrateful, indeed, not to recognize. I owe a heavier debt to poor Willie than ten times the sum can pay.

"Where are those invoices?" he added, turning to her betrayer.

"In Mr. Bentley's desk, sir."

"You are mistaken, Bessie. I have not——"

"In your desk," repeated his victim, calmly. "In the black letter-case, clasped with silver. Search, and you will find them there."

"I cannot recollect."

"You *must recollect* it. My husband gave them to you here, in this room, and saw you place them there. Look for them, as you value all that you hold dear—all that you have lived for!"

"Seek for them, John—seek for them," said Mr. Haman, mistaking the hidden menace in her words for the effect of excitement. "I will get the ledger from the cashier myself; better to have no witnesses to this sad—sad affair."

"Are you mad?" whispered the hypocrite, as soon as the speaker had quitted the room.

"No; I have recovered my senses."

"This is folly—jealousy."

"Jealousy!" repeated Bessie, with a look of such withering contempt that it stung him to the very soul. "Jealousy! That has passed; for there can be no jealousy without love; and scorn of your unmanly baseness has cured me of my folly. You have trifled with me, by pretending a passion you never really felt—betrayed the friend who trusted you—the simple, confiding girl, who, in her ignorance of the world, regarded you as some superior being—who would have given her life for you. All this I have borne; but I will not tamely submit to the infamy of being persuaded to bestow my hand upon a felon."

"I must have those invoices," she added.

"What if I refuse?"

"Listen to me, John Bentley," replied his visitor, calmly. "In teaching—in compelling me to despise you, by revealing your sordid nature, you destroyed your influence over me; in marrying me to Walter Glyde, you gave him a defender."

"So it appears," muttered the schemer.

"If I leave this office without the proofs—the papers on which he has written a confession of his crime—you see you cannot deceive me by substituting others—I will defeat your marriage; defeat it at the very altar."

"How?" demanded her hearer, axious to ascertain how far he might venture to trifle with her menaces.

"By publicly proclaiming my own shame—proclaiming it in the church, if no other means can avail me—and your infamy!"

"And what pledge have I, if I yield, them, that you will keep faith with me?"

"My word."

John Bentley regarded her earnestly.

"I would not willingly proclaim my own disgrace," she added.

"Enough," said her betrayer. "You shall have them."

"Have you found the invoices, John?" inquired Mr. Haman, as he reappeared with the huge ledger under his arm.

"I believe I have, sir," was the reply.

Bessie watched him attentively; never once removing her dark, searching eyes, as he turned over the contents of the letter-case.

"There they are," he said, handing them to the cotton-spinner.

"Mrs. Glyde," said the old man, speaking kindly, "I cannot permit these proofs of what commercial men would consider my weakness to quit this room. There they are. Examine them; satisfy yourself they are complete; and when you have so satisfied yourself—there is the fire. You understand me."

The kind-hearted man placed them in her hand, as he concluded.

Bessie did examine them, most carefully. The handwriting of her husband was too familiar to her to be mistaken. With a cry of joy she thrust them between the bars of the grate, scarcely venturing to breathe till they were consumed, when her feelings, which had been strung to the highest pitch, gave way, and seizing the hand of her benefactor, she pressed it to her lips, and sobbed convulsively.

"There; that will do," said the cotton-spinner, kindly, "that will do. Write to Walter Glyde that he may come back safely; neither Mr. Bentley nor myself will ever breathe a word of the affair."

"Bless you, sir, for your goodness! And may you never be deceived where you have placed confidence, as I have been!"

"Alluding to her husband," observed Mr. Haman, as she quitted the office.

"Doubtless," said the hypocrite.

"Do you know, I had almost a quarrel with that obstinate fool Lawrence, the cashier? He all but refused to give me up my own ledger, till he had detected, as he said, the error. Let him still think it one," continued the old gentleman, scratching out the figures, and inserting the proper ones in the page. "There, I have initialled them; no one can dispute their correctness now."

"The amnesty is, indeed, complete."

"Do you know, John, I have a suspicion?"

"Of me, sir?"

"Yes. I can't help thinking that you kept the invoices in your own private desk, to prevent them falling into the hands of Lawrence."

"You are right," said Mr. Bentley, after a pause.

"Ah, I thought so!"

"I had made the discovery, but refused Glyde's entreaties to destroy the proofs of his guilt; in fact, as I told him, I had no power to do so. Hence, I suspect, the reason of Bessie's resentful tone towards me. You must have observed it?"

"To speak plainly, I did think it rather strange. But what is this request you have to make to me?"

"You have anticipated it."

"How so?"

John Bentley pointed to the grate.

"By the noble act you have just performed. It was my intention, on the day that makes me the happiest of men, to solicit your indulgence for Walter Glyde."

"You are a noble fellow!" exclaimed the cotton-spinner, slapping him familiarly upon the shoulder; "and hang me if I don't feel prouder of you as a son-in-law than if you had the best fortune in Lancashire at your back."

"We should be careful how we praise, sir," said the hypocrite.

"Not with such proofs as I have had."

With all Mr. Haman's approval of his intended son-in-law, he never gave Miss Westbury back the deed by which she so disinterestedly settled her fortune upon him. It was not from meanness; for Gilbert Haman was anything but a mean man; neither was it forgetfulness. Perhaps, being so wealthy, he reconciled himself to the sacrifice by recollecting that he could at any time make it up to her from his own hoarded wealth.

Two days later a brilliant party assembled at the Collegiate Church—since promoted to the rank of a cathedral—to witness the marriage of John Bentley and the wealthy heiress: a bishop pronounced the nuptial benediction.

"God bless you, my child!" said her father, who appeared sadly overcome at parting with her. "May you be as happy as a wife as you have been good and dutiful as a child. Make her a good husband, John. It is all I ask," he added.

"Of course, he will make her a good husband," observed her aunt. How could the husband of Mary prove otherwise than good?"

"How indeed!" echoed the bridesmaids.

There was a great breakfast, as a matter of course, at the residence of the cotton-spinner, followed by the usual toasts and speeches, in the midst of which the newly-wedded pair started in a carriage and four for their wedding-tour to the Lakes.

A hearty-cheer from the mill-hands, assembled in front of the house, bade them God speed upon their way.

"Well, mother," said Sam, when he made his appearance at the cottage in the afternoon, "they be gone a towerin, as the butler called it."

"He be a lucky mun," observed the widow.

"Who? John Bentley? I think he be full partner. I heer'd t' cashier, who gave us all half-a-crown a piece, say so."

"Did thee see um married?" inquired his mother.

"No; but I seed 'em start; and Miss Mary did look so pretty in her white veil and flowers, and so happy."

"She is a good young lady, said Bessie; "and I pray Heaven she may continue so. But I do not envy her," she added to herself; "I do not envy her."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

WHAT IS THE HARDEST MODE TO DIE?

To be shot dead is one of the easiest modes of terminating life; yet, rapid as it is, the body has leisure to feel and reflect. On the first attempt, by one of the frantic adherents of Spain, to assassinate William, Prince of Orange, who took the lead in the revolt of the Netherlands, the ball passed through the bones of the face and brought him to the ground. In the instant preceding stupefaction, he was able to frame the notion that the ceiling of the room had fallen and crushed him. The cannot-shot which plunged into the brain of Charles XII. did not prevent him from seizing his sword by the hilt. The idea of an attack, and the necessity for defence, was pressed on him by a blow which we should have supposed too tremendous to leave an interval of thought. But it by no means follows that the inflicting of fatal violence is accompanied by a pang. From what is known of the first effect of gun-shot wounds, it is probable that the impression is rather stunning than acute. Unless death be immediate, the pain is as varied as the nature of the injuries, and these are past counting up. But there is nothing singular in the dying sensation, though Lord Byron remarked the physiological peculiarity that the expression is invariably that of languor, while in death from a stab, the countenance reflects the traits of natural character, of gentleness or ferocity, to the last breath. Some of these cases are of interest, to show with what slight disturbance life may go on under a mortal wound, till it *finally comes to a sudden stop. A foot-soldier at Waterloo, pierced by a musket ball in the hip, begged water of a trooper, who chanced to possess a canteen of beer. The wounded man drank, returned his heartiest thanks, mentioned that his regiment was nearly exterminated, and, having proceeded a dozen yards on his way to* the rear, fell to the earth, and with one convulsive movement of his limbs, concluded his career. "Yet his voice," says the trooper, who himself tells the story, "gave scarcely the smallest sign of weakness." Capt. Basil Hall, who, in early youth, was present at the battle of Corunna, has singled out, from the confusion which consigns to oblivion the woes and gallantry of war, another instance, extremely similar, which occurred on that occasion. An old officer, who was shot in the head, arrived pale and faint at the temporary hospital, and begged the surgeon to look at his wound, which was pronounced mortal. "Indeed, I feared so," he responded, with impatient utterance, "and yet I should like very much to live a little longer, if it were possible. He laid his sword upon a stone, at his side, "as gently," says Hall, "as if its steel had been turned to glass," and almost immediately sunk dead on the turf.

◆

The Scotchman Outwitted, a Sporting Anecdote.—Some years since, before the sale of game was legalized, and a present of it was thought worth the expense of carriage, an Englishman who had rented a moor within twenty miles of Inverness, wishing to send a ten brace box of grouse to his friends in the south, directed his gilly to procure a person to take the box to the capital of the north, from whence the London steamer sailed. Not one, however, of the miserably poor tenants in the neighborhood could be found who would take the box for a less sum than eight shillings. This demand was thought so unreasonable, that the Englishman complained to a Scotch friend who was shooting along with him. The Scotchman replied, "that the natives always made a point of imposing as much as possible upon strangers; but," said he, "if you will leave it to me, I will manage the matter for you; for with all their inclination to knavery, they are the simplest people under the sun." A few days thereafter, going out a-shooting, they saw a man loading his cart with peats, when the Scotchman, approaching him, said, after the usual salutation, "What are you going to do with the peats?" "I'm going to Inverness to sell them," was the reply. "What do you get for them?" "One shilling and eightpence, sir." "Indeed! Well, I will buy them from you if you will deliver them for me in Inverness." "That I will, and thank you too, sir." All agreed, the Scotchman resumed his walk for about twenty yards, when he suddenly turned round and said, "By the by, I have a small box I want taken to the same place. You can place it on the top of the peats?" "That I will, and welcome, sir." "Well, if [illegible] will call at the lodge in the evening, I will [illegible] have you the direction for the peats, and you [illegible] and ac- the box at the same time." He did [illegible] of peats tually carried the box and gave [illegible] ough neither for one shilling and eightpence; [illegible] his neighbors the same man nor any one [illegible] for less than eight would forward the box [illegible] shillings.

◆

—Happiness is [illegible] evident to us in this life by deliverance fr[illegible] evil; we have not real and positive good. "Happy he who sees the day!" said a blind [illegible]an; but a man who sees clearly does not [illegible] so. "Happy he who is healthy!" said an [illegible]valid; when he is well he does not feel the [illegible]piness of health.

◆

—O, sin, how you paint your face! how you flatter us, poor mortals, on to death! You never appear to the sinner in your true character; you make fair promises, but you never fulfil one; your tongue is smoother than oil, but the poison of asps is under your lip!

A FRAGMENT OF OCTOBER.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

Deep as the Summer's purple bloom,
The Fall-time's misty gold
Is lying on the prairie-lands,
Gray fields, and faded wold,
Just as it used to lie, mother,
In Fall-times sweet and old.
In Autumns of the past, mother,
The dearest past of all,
Whose phantom winds pursue us yet,
Whose shadows round us fall,
But whose wild bliss of bird or breeze
We never may recall!

For oh! in youth's dilated Spring
We see with clearer eyes,
And hear with purer sense the bloom
And song that round us lies,
And walk the radiant paths of an
Unfallen paradise!

'Tis gone! For me the beauty of
That dim remembered Spring,
And life's diviner Summers now
Their splendors round me fling,
And Hope, that make life's fever-pain,
Is a forgotten thing!
Round me dead dreams fall, sad as rain
From home's deserted eaves,
For me no more her radiant web
The loom of Fancy weaves,
And all life's promise seems to lie
Under the fallen leaves!

The Ideal passed me long ago,
But *one* sweet Real staid,
Thy faithful love, thy holy love,
That never yet betrayed;
And leaning on that love, mother,
My heart is not afraid!
My soul is not afraid, mother,
Tho' round me broken lie
The golden dreams that blessed me once
In sweeter days gone by;
For, losing that which fades, I find
The love that cannot die!

FOREST ADVENTURES.—No. 5.

BY COL. WALTER B. DUNLAP.

A FANDANGO WITH A RHINOCEROS.

If I had only counted the value of the meat and horns of the two oryxes, I should have felt that they cost me dear enough, for I had lost the best horse I owned—by far the best horse in the party. But I did not look at the matter in that light. The adventure formed a grand page in the history of my experience; and, on the whole, I was more than satisfied with the result. Two days afterwards we met a party of Boers, who had been into the interior after ivory, and of them I purchased two horses, one of which proved to be fully equal, in every point, to the animal I had lost.

Early one morning, just as we were inspanning for a start, my boy Dan called my attention to something which sat upon a small knoll, about two hundred yards distant. It appeared to be a large bird, of the size of a buzzard, with plumage like fire and burnished gold. The rays of the rising sun had just fallen upon it, and a more beautiful flashing of colors I never saw. Harry had his rifle by his side, and as soon as he saw the object, he took aim and fired. The bird moved, but did not offer to leave its rest, though the ball had furrowed the ground close by its feet. Ben Gilroy took the next shot; but he had just eaten his breakfast, and was too full of meat and coffee to be sure of his mark. At this second essay the bird moved again, and seemed to be wondering what was the matter. I took my best Wrisley rifle, and squatted down, making a rest by placing my elbows upon my knees. My aim was sure, and as I fired the bird fell over upon its side, seemingly without a struggle. We found it to be a web-footed bird, much like the flamingo, though with shorter legs and neck. Its plumage was blue and red, with shades of the most beautiful purple imaginable. I took off the skin, and pinned it to one of the wagon covers to dry.

That afternoon we pulled up by the shore of a small lake, and unyoked our oxen about five o'clock. While Ben and the two Mozambique men went to a neighboring thicket after wood for a fire, I got out and prepared the carcass of a springbok which we had killed on the day before. In a little while the two servants returned with wood, and when I asked them where Ben was, they informed me that he had stopped to pick some berries which he had found growing upon a creeping vine. I wondered what kind of berries he could have discovered, and when old Gash had got the meat ready for cooking, I thought I would go and see.

The thicket where the wood had been obtained was some twenty rods away, towards a marshy arm of the lake, and when I reached the edge of it, I stopped and called my friend by name. I called a second time, but received no answer. I found the track where the Mozambiques had gone in, and pushed into the thicket, calling Ben's name as I advanced.

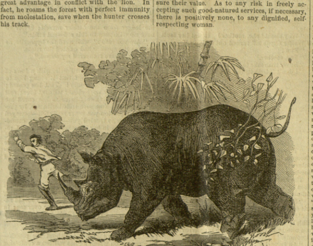
Where could the old fellow have gone? I found the spot where the wood had been cut, but I found nothing of Ben. Upon a low bush I discovered some small red berries, very much in look and taste like the high-bush cranberries of New England; but I did not care to eat them. I did not need them, and I knew not what peculiar properties they might possess. I was upon the point of calling again, when I thought I heard a sound ahead of me. I pushed on a little further, and then stopped and listened again. I heard the same sound, as though some one was digging at the roots of a tree. A few steps further on I came to a dense mass of thorn bushes, through which it was impossible for me to make my way. Beyond was a copse of tall, slender trees, and I could see the tops of two or three of them vibrating. Ben must be there, digging after something. I called to him again; but he did not seem to hear me. I could not go through this hedge of thorns, but I could go around it; and with this latter idea I struck off to the right, and soon cleared the obstruction.

"Aha, old fellow—I've caught you, have I!" I cried, as I approached the place where the disturbance was going on. "Why didn't you——"

I was about to ask why I had not been answered; but the words stuck in my throat. It was not old Ben at all. It was a huge black rhinoceros, of the double-horned species! He was tearing up the earth with his horns, and puffing and blowing like a porpoise. What a situation for a hunter! For weeks I had been longing to meet one of these fellows, and here I was, face to face with as magnificent a specimen of the tribe as ever walked, and without my rifle. I had my pistols in my belt; but of what avail could a pistol be against such armor as this monster wore. Could I get to the wagons, and back again, before the prize would be gone?

But thoughts of what I *might* do were very soon forced to give place to thoughts of what I *must* do; for the rhinoceros began to intimate that he had had about enough of my company. He gave a loud, defiant snort, and with his head bent to the ground, and his short tail erect, he darted towards me.

I say he *darted* towards me. Be it known that the black, two horned rhinoceros, despite his short legs, and clumsy-looking feet, is able to make some quick movements. In a straight line he can run almost as fast as a horse, though his enormous bulk prevents him from changing his course with much agility. There are four kinds of the rhinoceros in Southern Africa—two of the black species, and two of the white. Of the former, one has two horns, while the other has only one. Both the white species have two horns. The anterior horn of the common white rhinoceros, or *muchocho*, is from two to three feet long, and points backward over the head; while the horn of the *kobaoba* is often over four feet in length, and is inclined forward over the nose. The posterior horns of all varieties are very short, seldom growing more than eight or ten inches in length. The black varieties are smaller than the white, but far more dangerous, being more muscular, and of a more pugnacious disposition. These horns, unlike the horns of other animals, are perfectly solid, composed of agglutinated horny fibres, something like whalebone, and are not attached to the skull. They rest upon the nasal bones, and are bedded in a sort of callous mass, which is removed with the skin. Excepting the elephant and the hippopotamus, the rhinoceros is the largest of terrestrial animals, and one of the most powerful. His terrible horn makes him a fatal enemy to the elephant; and his armor-like skin gives him great advantage in conflict with the lion. In fact, he roams the forest with perfect immunity from molestation, save when the hunter crosses his track.



As the rhinoceros came towards me, my first impulse was to escape by the way I had come; but that was not to be done, for I had moved around so far that the line of my enemy's course cut me off from retreat in that direction. I must do something, and that, too, very quickly; so I dodged behind a clump of trees, and called out for help. Had the huge beast been as nimble in turning corners as he was swift of foot in the race, I should not have lived to call out many more times; but when he had advanced to the attack the third time I felt perfectly safe, for I saw that while there were bushes and trees behind which to dodge, I could keep clear of him. Still there was danger. I could not turn my back and run; for in that event I should be surely overtaken; and there might easily occur some accident to throw me upon those fatal horns. But at that time the thought of danger was not what troubled me. I did not think of my own escape so much as I did of the escape of the rhinoceros. Where in the world was Ben? I halloed with all my might. There were a score of loaded rifles not far away—why could not some of them be with me?

My shouts served to exasperate the furious beast, and his puffs and snorts became terrific; but this, instead of increasing my danger, materially lessened it, for as the brute grew more and more eager in his ferocity, he rushed at me blindly, and was more easily avoided. But I was getting tired, while the strength of my enemy seemed to be on the increase.

Where was Ben Gilroy? Where were the others of my companions? Supper must be waiting. Why did they not come to call me? Ha!—perhaps the report of my pistol might arouse them. I drew it, and fired—fired at the rhinoceros—and the ball had about as much effect upon his leathery hide as it would have had upon a plate of iron.

Hark! Somebody is coming. Yes. I hear voices. Some one calls my name.

And in a few moments more old Ben and Harry Rusk came upon the scene. Harry had charged his rifle with one of my steel-pointed conical balls; and as soon as he gained a safe position, he fired. The ball entered behind the shoulder of the ugly brute, and Mr. Rhinoceros wound up his fandango with a pirouette that landed him upon his side.

When the affair had been thus settled, Ben very easily explained why I had not found him. When the Mozambiques left him, he had picked a few berries, and then gone further into the thicket; and as he was poking around he discovered the rhinoceros; but being to the windward of the beast his presence was not noticed. Instead of going back by the way he had entered, he slipped out from the thicket by what he thought would be a shorter course, thus missing me, and hastened back to the camp after help; for he had gone out without his rifle. What had seemed a very long time to me, as I chassez'd and polked with the rhinoceros, had not been so very long after all; as Ben assured me that he had lost no time in going and returning.

We took off the skin of the huge beast, and found the anterior horn to measure twenty inches in length. I offered Harry the trophy, but he would not take it. He said I had earned it fairly, and I should keep it. However, we compromised the matter by his taking the shorter horn. But he did not keep it. A week afterwards he shot another of the same variety, and gave me back the little keepsake, so that both the horns of my partner of the fandango should keep company in my cabinet.

Before we left that section I had the good fortune to shoot a white rhinoceros of the kobaoba variety, from whose nose I took a beautiful horn measuring four feet and one inch in length.

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THE AMERICAN INDIANS.

The most ignorant among them believe in one Great Spirit, who rewards the good and punishes the wicked. "I was one day," says a late traveller far into the interior of our country, "speaking to a chief on the subject, and endeavoring to impress on his mind some plain, moral precepts; he listened attentively. When I concluded, he raised his head a little, and, with his eyes fixed on the ground, he said, in a solemn tone, 'The words you have spoken have sunk deep into my heart, and I shall often think of them when I am alone. It is true I am ignorant, but I never lie down at night without whispering to the Great Spirit a prayer for forgiveness, if I have done anything wrong during the day.'"

THE ETIQUETTE OF TRAVEL.

The American-man proper should, we think, have the palm for civility to women. Of course, there are "bears" in every latitude; geographers to the contrary notwithstanding; still—the fact above stated remains. One is particularly struck with its truth in travelling. It is quite astonishing the pains an American gentleman will take to open a refractory car-window, or to give up a shady seat for a sunny one in favor of a strange lady; or to answer, patiently and kindly, the thousand and one distracted questions of the "lone female" about depots, and trains, and hotels, and the like. The endurance with which he will stifle in the near proximity of a relieving window, if there is a delicate baby to be considered, in the arms of some strange lady near him; the trouble he will take to navigate a glass of water from the far end of the car to some thirsty pair of feminine lips; zig-zag-ging back again to place the tumbler in its accustomed place. The readiness with which he will lend a helping hand to a valise, or a baby, for the overburdened woman, in case of a dearth of "porters;" all these things are so common in America, that one has really need to leave it, to measure their value. As to any risk in freely accepting such good-natured services, if necessary, there is positively none, to any dignified, self-respecting woman.

Among the various absurd books on etiquette, we wonder that none has been concocted on the etiquette of the steamboat, the railroad-car and the stage-coach. How radiant a smile now—may one bestow upon a gentleman who, in a respectful manner, has rendered a lady any one of the wayside and useful services above-named? And if any amusing incident happen in their vicinity, to vary the tedium of a long day of travel, must the lady look like iced virtue, or may she smile naturally and properly, as if she were not standing a very obvious hedge-hog-guard over herself, for fear of self-committal? May her valise repose on the same hook with *his* carpet-bag, without a breach of the proprieties? And how is it that these, and many more interesting queries, have not been answered in some one of the many delicious "Guides for Women" which are the ornament of our Circulating Libraries and the infinite amusement of the class for whom they are designed, on such a large scale of justice and common-sense; being written mostly by old bachelors and old maids who, having been untimely clipped, like the fox in the fable, naturally desire to curtail the general enjoyment.

That last sentence might be shorter, but I proceed to affirm, that there are occasionally cases which these all-wise books of etiquette fail to meet. One such occurred, not long since, on a pleasure-trip up the Hudson River, in a day-boat. Dinner was expected to be served at one, refreshments not to be had at any other time. One of the ladies on board, having had no appetite for her very early breakfast, found herself at ten o'clock quite faint from exhaustion. A gentleman of the party went down to the cook and begged a cup of tea. That busy and outraged fuctionary turned upon him with a full heart, and a full saucepan, and remarked "that he would see the lady —— first." In fact he quite declined. Returning on deck to the famished damsel, he informed her of his non-success. Just then she spied a strange lady opposite, drawing from a basket some cakes for a restless little child. Why should I not ask that lady for one of those cakes? she queried. "What! ask a perfect stranger!" ejaculated her lady companion; "impossible!" adding that usual Mrs. Grundy annihilator, "*Who ever heard of such a thing?*" "Nevertheless I am about to do it," replied the famished lady; and suiting the action to the word, she crossed the deck, and said, "Will you have the goodness to give me one of your cakes? I actually can't wait for dinner, for I've eaten no breakfast." "With great pleasure," replied the owner of the basket, filling her hands with "goodies." The laughing lady-beggar returned to her shocked companion, and forthwith commenced eating. Now who shall say that this "breach of etiquette" was not better than spoiling a day of expected festivity by a too prolonged exhaustion? I tell you there are cases which these wonderful books—blessings on their astute inventors—occasionally fail to meet. FANNY FERN.

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HOW TO DO IT.

The pains which are sometimes taken to hide from a child the fact of its prettiness seems to *us* as futile, as foolish. If it were possible *always* to conceal the fact from its knowledge by any of the parental subterfuges in use; were there no mirrors either on the walls, or in the admiring eyes of spectators, such precautionary measures might possibly avail. But, as this is not the case, would it not be wiser frankly to admit the fact to the child, adding the necessity of its not disappointing, by mental and moral deficiencies, those who are attracted at first sight by that which, say what we will, is invariably *expected* to endorse corresponding spiritual perfections? "Handsome is that handsome does," and "Beauty is only skin deep," are nice maxims; at the same time, while the owners of the sagest lips which ever uttered them, can be fooled by a pair of bright eyes or a lovely form, it is not worth while to give these maxims a *too* loud-mouthed utterance. Young people are keener critics than we imagine, and *sometimes* they look among the other virtues, for *consistency* in their elders. FANNY FERN.

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PRESENTS.—When thou makest presents, let them be of such things as will last long; to the end they may be in some sort immortal, and may frequently refresh the memory of the receiver.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

NEWBURGH writes us the following intelligent letter. He says:—"Your correspondent *J. T. M., California*, wishes some 'scientific reader' of the LEDGER to solve a question which, he says, has greatly perplexed him. He recites the well-known fact that by travelling westward around the world the traveller will find on arriving at the place of departure, that he has lost one day, and by making the circuit in an easterly direction that he gains one day. The difficulty which occurs to your correspondent he states thus:—'If I start from St. Louis, travelling westward, and every evening inquire the day of the month of the people whom I pass on my journey, at what point in my route around the earth will I find that the inhabitants have gained one day on my reckoning—or, supposing that I ask the question every day, how is it possible that the natives whom I pass should be able to gain one day upon me?' He says that he has gone from St. Louis to San Francisco, and finds that the additional day is not gained during that part of the route. Although not a 'scientific reader,' I think I can solve the difficulty of your correspondent.—Suppose that J. T. M. starts from St. Louis at sunrise, and journeys westward along with the sun, he will, of course, keep that luminary longer in view than if he had remained stationary at St. Louis, thus lengthening his day, so that when it is sunset with him, it will be somewhat later than that at St. Louis, which has made no effort to keep pace with the sun. On arriving at San Francisco he will find that when it is six o'clock in the evening at that place, it will be nine o'clock at St. Louis, so that the latter city has gained three hours of the required day. After travelling another space of the same extent, he will find that when it is six o'clock in the evening at the point at which he has arrived, it will be twelve o'clock at night at St. Louis. J. T. M. will readily see that if he still journeys on for an hour he will arrive at a point where the time will be seven o'clock in the evening of, say the *first* day of the month, and, an additional hour having also passed at St. Louis, the time at that place will be one hour after midnight, or one o'clock in the morning of the *second* day of the month. It will thus be seen that while it is the first day of the month with him, it will be the second day at St. Louis. At the completion of the entire circuit of the earth he would be twenty-four hours behind the time at the place of starting, but having pursued the journey far enough to designate the point at which the calendar change of date occurs, it will not be necessary to continue the illustration. But, your correspondent may still ask, 'at what point shall I find the people, on two successive days, showing a difference of one day of the month in their respective records?' I answer—at that point where the almanacs are variously computed, either East or West, from any given meridian of longitude. Thus, if the people of any portion of the earth's surface shall compute their calendar from the meridian of Washington, or St. Louis, counting time eastwardly, they will show a discrepancy of one day between their own and the records of their neighbors who have computed their almanacs by counting the time westwardly from the same meridian."—Another correspondent, "C. H., of Boston," sends us the following on the same subject. He says:—"The very intelligent question of your California correspondent may be answered as follows: He will find that each place which he visits in his travels preserves the calendar or reckoning of days, which it obtained from the Europeans who first visited it. The East Indies, of course, were first visited by travellers passing East from Europe. Anybody who goes there the same way finds no variation in the calendar. But a traveller who goes 'round the world' thither—travelling West—finds that he is one day behind. California, on the other hand, as all other places on the American continent, was first visited by travellers sailing west from Europe. Accordingly no variation in the calendar is observed by a person who goes thither in the same direction; but if a traveller comes there who has made the journey 'overland' from Europe to India and China, and thence across the Pacific, *he* finds on his arrival in California that he has gained a day. He has only gained a day because he comes in an opposite direction from that of the travellers who discovered the country and gave it its calendar."

D. L.—There are, no doubt, many cases of suffering, and of *seeming* neglect of soldiers, in the Union army; but, from all we have been able to learn, it is our opinion that there never has been such an instance of munificent and detailed effort to make its armies as comfortable as possible, shown by any other nation under heaven, as that which has been made by the people of the loyal States on behalf of their armies since the commencement of the rebellion. And it is the united testimony of all European officers who have had an opportunity to form intelligent opinions on the subject, that no armies of the Old World, which they have ever seen, had anything like the care and attention shown for the moral, mental and physical well-being of the soldiers as is exhibited in that behalf for our citizen-soldiery. What is anything which our soldiers have suffered compared to what the British troops underwent in the Crimea, when one of them could hardly pull the boots from his frozen feet without pulling his toes off with them! We have in too many cases been made to pay dearly for our inexperience, superficiality and vanity; and the evils resulting from those national traits no powers less than omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence could have prevented.

MATILDA.—You seem to find the "study of uniforms," as you call it, a very interesting pursuit. The only way we know of to enable one to remember the badges whereby the different rank, &c., of officers is shown, is to commit them to memory. In the first place there are three distinct arms of the service (besides the engineers), to wit, cavalry, artillery and infantry. The colors—that is, of the trimmings of uniforms, back-ground of shoulder-straps, &c.—of the cavalry are yellow; of the artillery, red; of the infantry, blue. A second lieutenant (who is the lowest commissioned officer in the service) wears a plain shoulder-strap; a first lieutenant's shoulder-strap has one cross-bar, and a captain's two cross-bars, at each end; a major's a gold leaf, and a lieutenant-colonel's a silver leaf, at each end; a colonel's, a silver eagle in the middle; a brigadier-general's, one star, a major-general's two stars, and a commander-in-chief's three stars. Knowing these last-mentioned facts, one sees the pith of the remark which a gentleman made to a newly-appointed colonel who had just got the eagle put upon his shoulder-strap, namely, "May your eagle soar till it reaches the *stars*."

HECTOR.—We do not know precisely what you mean when you ask, "Has morality kept pace with civilization?" and therefore can not answer you with a "yes" or "no." We can say, however, that *Christian* nations are much more moral than uncivilized ones; but whether a nation can be *civilized* before it becomes at least ostensibly *christianized*, we are not ready to determine, though we think it cannot. So-called civilized people, not christianized, have been considered more moral than uncivilized people. And it stands to reason that they should be so, because they have more intelligence and more self-control, and more resources and amusements. Nations or tribes not civilized have no rational recreations, and when they want a "little enjoyment" their only resource is to make beasts of themselves.

T., Michigan.—When a lady and gentleman come to a street-crossing which is only wide enough for one to walk on, and the street is muddy, the gentleman should precede the lady in crossing, unless he be gallant enough to walk by her side, regardless of the mud, which perhaps would be *the* thing for him to do. Should he walk behind her, her modesty would compel her to drag her dress through the mud, instead of resorting to that neat and economical practice usually observed by ladies in regard to the preservation of their skirts from contact with "free soil" in its liquid state.

C. T.—The elocutionist who pronounces Iago *Yahgo*, does not pronounce the name correctly. It should be pronounced Ee-ah-go. But as the sound represented by *y*, is simply a corruption or modification of the sound represented by *ee* which the latter undergoes when it occurs before another vowel sound, an uncultivated or dull ear might mistake the correct pronunciation of the word Iago, when it is spoken quickly, for the false one of Yahgo.

SHUSHUGAH.—We cannot of course say from positive personal knowledge whether or not there is "any true romance in the North American Indians;" but we are inclined to believe that there is not. We have read romantic stories about "dark-eyed maidens of the forest," &c., but we never saw anything romantic in them, nor have we ever seen any one that has. The same remarks apply to "graceful Indian warriors," and such chaps generally.

CUBAN.—Your boy-lover is altogether too free and obtrusive with his caresses and demonstrations. It seems to us that your guardian ought to interfere. At any rate, you have a right to insist upon such affairs being settled according to the dictates of your own judgment and sense of delicacy and refinement.

MADISON.—A young lady who will leave her lover, after ten o'clock at night, to go sleigh-riding with another man, cannot have any very deep affection for the lover; and he could not be justly accused of unfaithfulness should he withdraw from the engagement.

EMMA L.—Your brother-in-law is mistaken in his notion that lead is melted, in making lead pencils, and poured into the wood; as you say, the wood is in two parts, and after the lead is put or laid in one half, the two parts are glued together.

N. C.—According to your own statement, your conduct to your wife has not been what it should be. You seem to forget that so far as his conduct towards ladies, and the socialities of life, are concerned, a husband is no longer a free agent, that his actions no longer affect himself alone, but that a feeble, gentle being tremblingly relies on him for protection, and pleads for his sympathy. A husband should remember that he has removed the trusting being whom he has made his wife, from a sphere in which probably she was surrounded by loving friends; for his sake she has surrendered all; to follow his uncertain fortunes she has left parents, brothers, home; she has pledged herself to love, honor, and obey him, and through all chance and change to cling only unto him, and it rests with him whether or not she shall redeem her pledge. For this great proof of confidence, for thus giving herself up unreservedly to form his future happiness, can he do less than love her, truly and faithfully? Can he do less than strive to render her life easy, her bondage light, her chains unfelt? Oh! if young men, before they marry, would but *think* a little seriously, if they would but consider the weighty responsibility they are about to assume, nothing less than the happiness or misery of a human being, how differently would they generally act! And then, after the ceremony is irrevocably performed, would that the young husband learned to regard his wife, not as a domestic slave, born only to administer to his wishes, to consult his convenience, to obey his commands; but as a companion, a faithful counsellor, a second self; as one whose interests are bound up and united with his own, and who, having qualities which he does not possess, is peculiarly adapted to assist his judgment, to forward his success, to study his benefit, and to promote his happiness.

UNCLE JAMES.—We do not see why you should be so prejudiced against bathing and swimming. The cold bath recommends itself in a multiplicity of cases; and is peculiarly beneficial to the inhabitants of populous cities, whose daily labors not only preclude them from the enjoyment of fresh air, but more frequently condemn them to a life strictly sedentary and confined. To the fully grown and aged it accelerates the motion of the blood, promotes the different secretions, and gives renewed and permanent vigor to the solids; while, to the young, cold bathing is of the utmost importance—promoting, as it does, their growth, increasing their strength, and sweeping away a multitudinous variety of ailments incidental to that period of life. No one, however, can enjoy the luxury of the bath thoroughly without being master of the art of swimming; an art which we hold to be one of the most important branches of gymnastics, both in a physical and moral point of view. Its effects in developing, invigorating, and giving health to the body are so great, and it is withal so easily learned, as to be of the very highest consequence. To all the advantages of cold bathing, it adds many others; for, on account of the exercise it affords, it enables the bather to remain much longer in the water, and thus, (in salt water at least) gives a greater opportunity of invigorating the skin, which is one of the greatest benefits of salt water bathing. Besides, the exercise alone greatly strengthens the lower extremities, the abdominal muscles, the muscles of the chest, the organs of respiration, the spine, neck and arms; and furnishes besides an agreeable and very pleasant excitement, the usual attendant of every brisk and manly exercise. Let your boys enjoy their baths.

SOUTHERN MATRON.—*Our* city of Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, was never "sacked by Algerine pirates." You have mistaken the place altogether. There is a small seaport in South Munster, Ireland, called Baltimore, which was sacked on the 20th of June, 1631, by the crews of two Algerine galleys, who landed in the dead of night, burnt the town, and bore off into slavery all who were not too old, or too young, or too fierce for their purpose. It was a sad blow to that part of the country, and the horrid event was celebrated and kept fresh in the memory of the inhabitants by songs and legends commemorating it. One poem, describing the surprise of the villagers in the dead of night, and their awaking to find their houses in flames and the turbaned pirates at their doors, gives the following vivid picture of the scene:

"Then flung the youth his naked hand against the shearing sword;
Then sprung the mother on the brand with which her son was gored;
Then sunk the grandsire on the floor, his grand-babes clutching wild;
Then fled the maiden moaning faint, and nestled with the child;
But see yon pirate strangled lies, and crushed with splashing heel,
While o'er him in an Irish hand there sweeps his Syrian steel—
Though virtue sink, and courage fail, and misers yield their store,
There's *one* hearth well avenged in the sack of Baltimore."

The place never recovered from this dreadful catastrophe, and is said to be a mere ruin now.

D. B.—The reason you cannot find a history of the derivation of the word "quiz" in any of the dictionaries, is probably because it has no derivation. It is not derived from any language in the world ever known, from the Babylonish confusion to this day. The way it came to have an existence is stated to be this: When a man named Richard Daly was patentee to the Irish theatres, he spent the evening of Saturday in company with many of the wits and men of fashion of the day. Gambling was introduced, when the manager staked a large sum that he would have spoken through all the principal streets of Dublin, by a certain hour next day (Sunday), a word having no meaning, and being derived from no known language. Wagers were laid, and stakes deposited. Daly repaired to the theatre, and despatched all the servants and supernumeraries with the word "Quiz," which they chalked on every door and shop-window in town. Shops being shut all next day, everybody going to and coming from their different places of worship saw the word, and everybody repeated it; so that "Quiz" was heard all through Dublin. The circumstance of so strange a word being on every door and window caused much surprise; and ever since, should a story be attempted to be passed current, it draws forth the expression, "You are quizzing me."

ALDINE.—We think we have before said that it is not probable that superstition will for many ages be entirely eradicated from human nature; but it is, no doubt, true, as you say, that the search after natural causes in modern times has done much to destroy it, and has created a popular pride of rationally accounting for every thing without the instrumentality of such witch-like agency as our fathers believed in. This scientific pride has served a very good end. It has removed a considerable amount of rubbish from the imaginative world, made men more courageous and independent as lords of creation, and pretty well established the important fact, that the world is our own inheritance, and that no mysterious agents of an invisible world are permitted to interfere with our proceedings to serve their own mischievous ends, by interrupting or controlling the ordinary laws of nature. Still the poetic soul can never altogether divest itself of superstitious impressions, especially in time of trouble, or in fearful and heartrending circumstances.

A READER, who some weeks since made inquiry through the LEDGER for a poem called "THE DRUNKARD," which he read many years since in an old volume in Dublin, and which begins,

"Along Drumcondra road I strolled," &c.,

is informed that it was written by Thomas Furlong, the author of several productions of considerable merit, and who was in early life a grocer's boy in one of the back streets in Dublin, from which obscure condition he by the force of his natural talents and perseverance made his way to a wide reputation and a recognized position in the literature of his country. "THE DRUNKARD" can be found in a book called "The Ballad Poetry of Ireland," which was published in Dublin some eighteen years ago. Whether you can purchase a copy of it or not in this country, we do not know. Your best course would be to inquire diligently for it at the bookstores.

LANSDOWNE.—For a horse with a hard mouth, there is no bit equal to one made of leather. A curb or any kind of severe bit will only irritate the horse, and make him pull harder.

HELENA.—It might properly be considered obtrusive for a man to join a lady acquaintance without an invitation from her to do so, as she was walking in the street with other ladies.

B. A. K.—The practice of advertising for a wife, is a low and vulgar one, to which, it seems to us, no man or woman who possessed a spark of delicacy could descend.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*

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The LEDGER is about the only paper in the country that has not increased its rates. The price of single copies is the same now as it always has been. We have heard of one or two newsdealers charging five cents a copy for the LEDGER, instead of four, in this city and neighborhood, on the ground that they had to pay more to us for it. This is false, and any newsdealer who makes such an assertion is a mean, petty swindler. We charge dealers who buy LEDGERS in large quantities, $25 a thousand—which is two and a half cents a copy, and those who buy in small quantities, two and three quarter cents a copy. No newsdealer, no matter how few copies he buys, has to pay more than 2¾ cents, so that he can afford to sell it for four cents.